Richard Corben's

Den 2!

Jeff Jones's

I'm Age!

Romero, Cronenberg, and Carpenter on horror films!

Plus Matena! Giménez! Philip José Farmer!

The adult illustrated fantasy magazine

September 1981

$2.00

HEAVY METAL

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HEAVY METAL®

HEAVY METAL SEPTEMBER 1981 VOL. V, NO. 6

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EDITORIAL

Recently, The Clash came to play at Bond's, a Manhattan nightclub with a near-2,000-person capacity. It became a spectacle as the crowds virtually fought over the right to buy in. And when the first night came, the mobs brought the fire marshals down on the place. They prevented ticket holders from entering the show that night and canceled the other concerts until the club and The Clash added dates, to compensate for an illegal number of oversold tickets.

However good The Clash were—and there were some wonderful moments spent with London's premier proto-punk band—the spectacle overshadowed the music. Regardless of The Clash's willingness to perform in a club, where an intimate interaction could be maintained, the fact of the event became more important than the concert. More than ever, I wanted the age of the mass spectacle to be doomed.

And in the age of the electronic village, as Alvin Toffler calls it, I see that possibility at hand. The day of the dinosaur may be at an end. The dinosaur—the massive monolithic totalitarian. The mass spectacle, the dinosaurian event, might just have become too much. The facts themselves speak out: the age of rock festivals has ended, and there are fewer large-hall concert tours making the circuit.

I hope now, with the advent of the electronic package—the home video system, the home computer, and the hand-held calculators—that impulse will be lost within the spectacle. Will all these compact, energy-efficient, functional tools hail the Tofflerian retribalization of the human community? The intimate gathering at the electronic roost—rather than submergence into the mass—may be at hand. People may thus relate more intimately at home, through electronic-systems interplay, rather than in depersonalized groupings.

But maybe that's all wishful thinking on the part of somebody who hopes his own rampant consumerist urge is something more than merely that. Yet, I do believe more people are gathering at home to enjoy a viewing of a favorite film on television, sharing with each other rather than being lost among the many. And all this electronic hardware barely suggests the software possibilities for the near future—people are constantly buying up home terminals, video recorders, and audio cassettes for their very own.

The sleek, mobile, independent unit can function—the trend is there. It's apparent in everything from the resurgence of small, one-person theatrical shows to the growth of personalized media. If the real language of our society is to be learned in its cultural manifestations, not in its political debates or religious demagoguery, then there is something to be learned here as well.

—B.B.

Chain Mail

Dear Brad,

I have a few things to say about the Corben interview you ran in *Heavy Metal*, June, July, August 1981. I remember when you were here to do the interview, I asked if I could see the manuscript. You said no, and you assured me that it would be a great interview, one that would show me as an intelligent, cultured, slightly mysterious person to my fans. You told me you had interviewed many people including famous rock stars and you had *never* received a complaint. Brad, this is a *complaint*. When I read the first installment, I was shocked. I was not presented as a cultured, intelligent person, but rather a petty, childish, borderline psychotic oaf. The interview contains many errors: errors of transcription, errors of editorial juxtaposition, and worse, errors of editorial taste and judgment. Yes, I know you called me to clarify a few points while you were assembling the thing, but damn it, Brad, if I could have read the entire manuscript before it was published, those errors and my embarrassment would have been avoided entirely.

I would now like to go over specific items, and I want you to publish this letter uncut and conspicuously in the next issue. Please, no smart intros or editorial inserts. You owe me that much, since I didn't have the chance to defend myself before you published the interview.

First, your introductions: in general they weren't as offensive as some of the later material but somewhat pretentious. After reading the introductions and interview and remembering back to when you were here, I get the feeling that you thought I was an extremely dull person and you would have to do an extensive amount of creative editorializing to make me appear as exciting as some swinging rock superstar. No, thank you. I'd rather be dull.

Your questions led the interview in directions that seem irrelevant to me. I think you were trying to psychoanalyze me and my work. I feel the images in my work do not specifically suggest what you infer. For instance, a drawing might show a hugely muscled male nude. This in itself is not deviant; however, the viewer projects some of his own feelings onto the drawing. He might view the art and say it shows "hidden homosexual or S&M tendencies." A simpler interpretation would be that the image shows a heroic idealism developed to such an extreme degree as to be slightly satirical and tongue-in-cheek. This is in fact the intent. I think much of your interview reveals more of you than me.

There are some items that should not have been discussed, things that are bad enough in private conversation but are inexcusable when published in print. My wife didn't care for being the subject of printed gossip. If I had been all together when you started asking about my wife and my private life, I would have stopped the interview. I'm not used to interviews and certainly not comfortable through them. I'm generally a nonverbal person. I don't respond well to fast-paced questions; I like to organize my thoughts before answering.

Some of your implications are idiotic. At the end of the first installment, you asked: "Will you ever draw a character with small breasts?" At the time it sounded like a joke and didn't need a serious answer. For you, I guess it did. I would like to point out that I have portrayed small-breasted women (Morningstar's *Venus* record cover that you used to illustrate the second installment of the interview), and I shall again when there is a need.

Early in the second installment, there is a transcription error. Eleven lines from the top, second column, it is printed "the German within me." I never said that. I am not German nor do I have anything against Germans. Those are not words I would use. In fact, this installment has too many errors to mention.

The Bill Griffith bit should have been deleted from the interview. Things said verbally in jest lose the humor when transcribed to cold type. I'm sorry this was printed. I have nothing against Bill Griffith. But even if I did, a published interview is not the place to expose such dirty laundry.

On the fifth page of the second installment, middle column, second line: my former boss's name is Ed Faust, not Ed Thoust. Sorry, Ed.

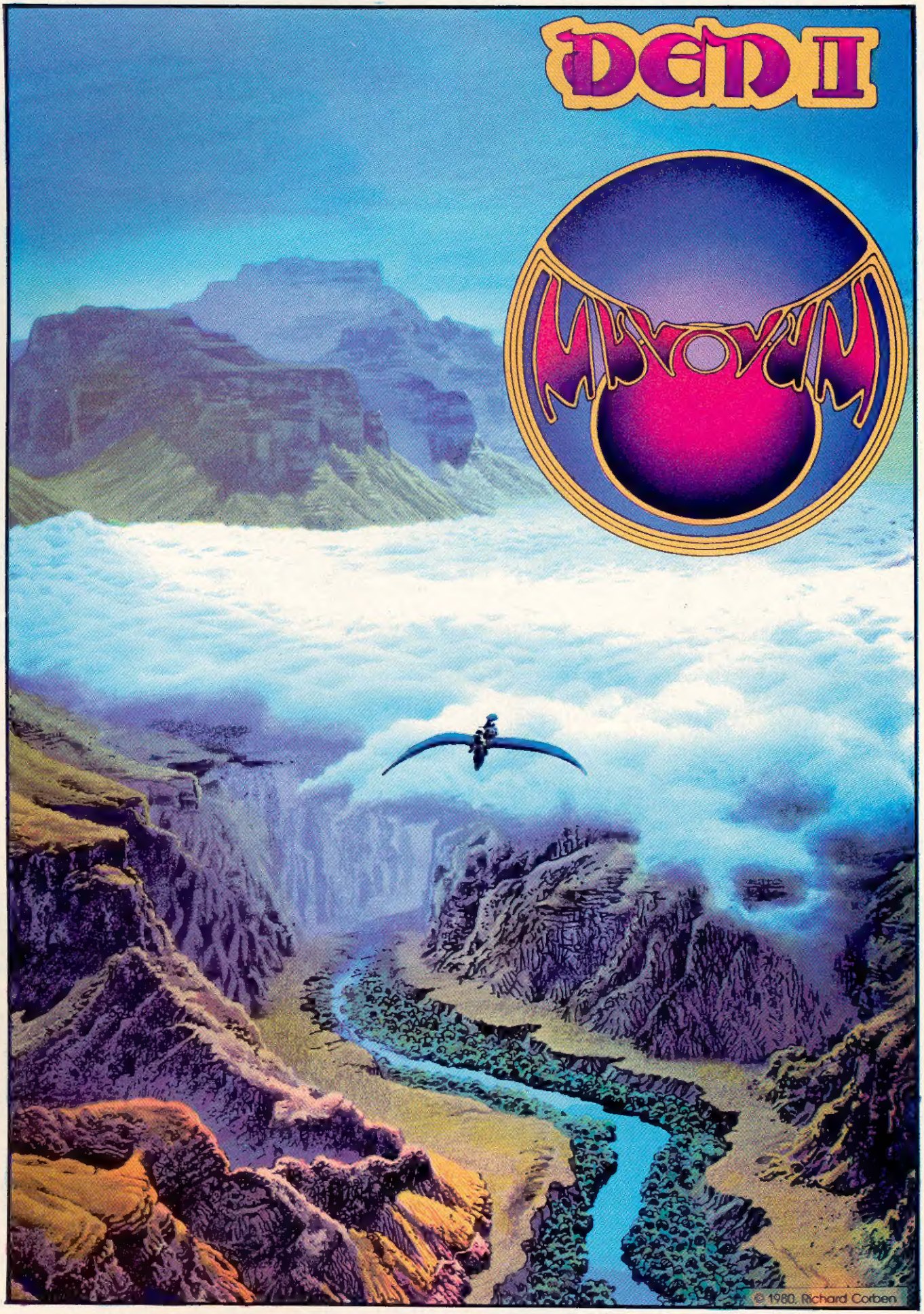
On the paragraphs concerning Armand Eisen and Gil Kane: Kane has never moved to Kansas City. At the bottom of the last page, second installment, there is a very bad error of editorial juxtaposition: in the first column we are discussing *Bloodstar*, then in the second column you switch to a paragraph where the subject was *Den*, without letting the reader know you changed the subject. It's all very confused and confusing. I have never had any legal rights to *Bloodstar*.

The last installment is the least offensive, but it is very confusing. The caption for the progressive stages of the *Arabian Nights* illustration makes no sense whatsoever. I believe you took a few lines from the transcription where I'm talking about another piece of artwork and transposed it to this cover. It reads like gibberish.

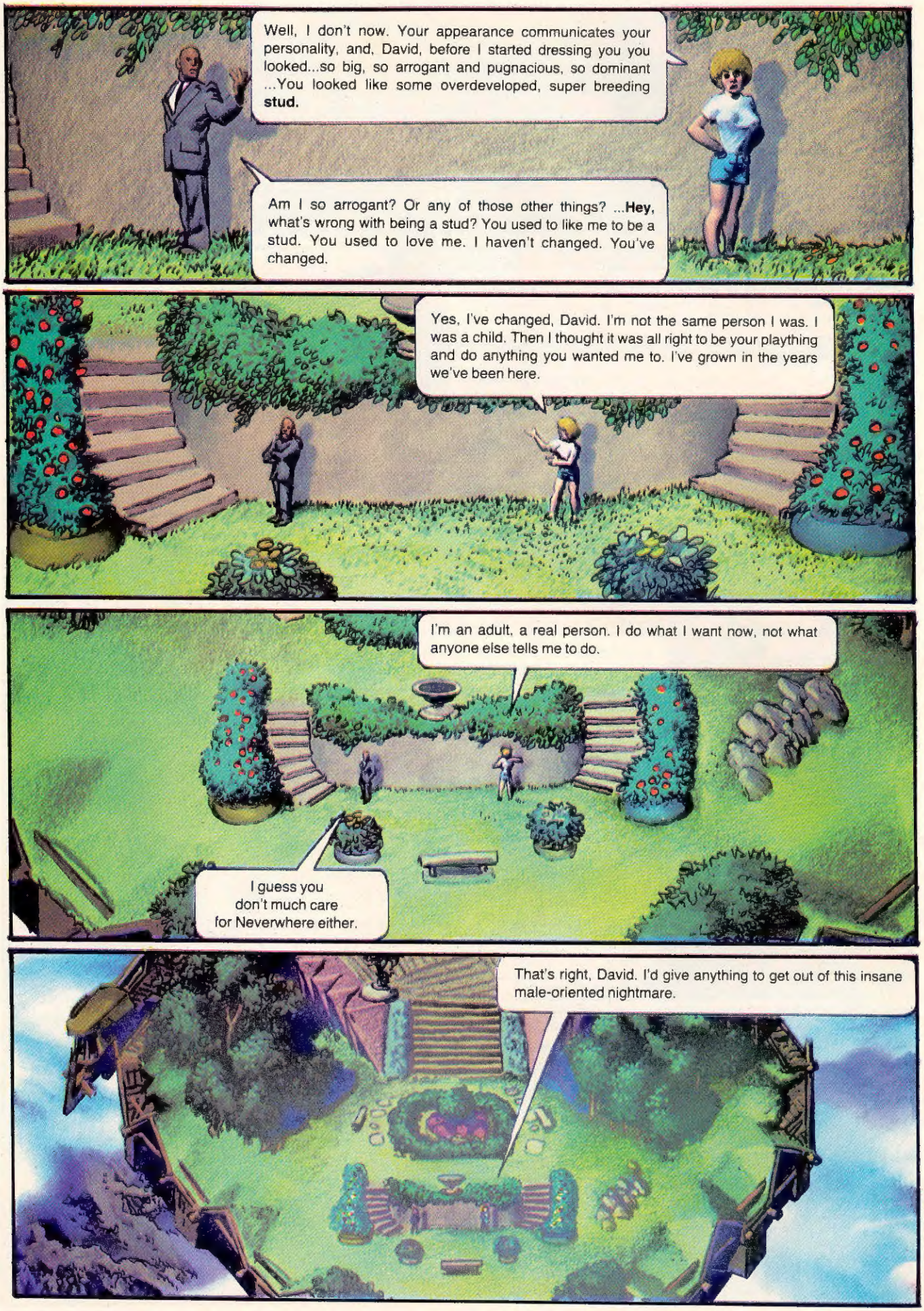
To my fans who were expecting an interview of great insight to my work, my sincere apologies.

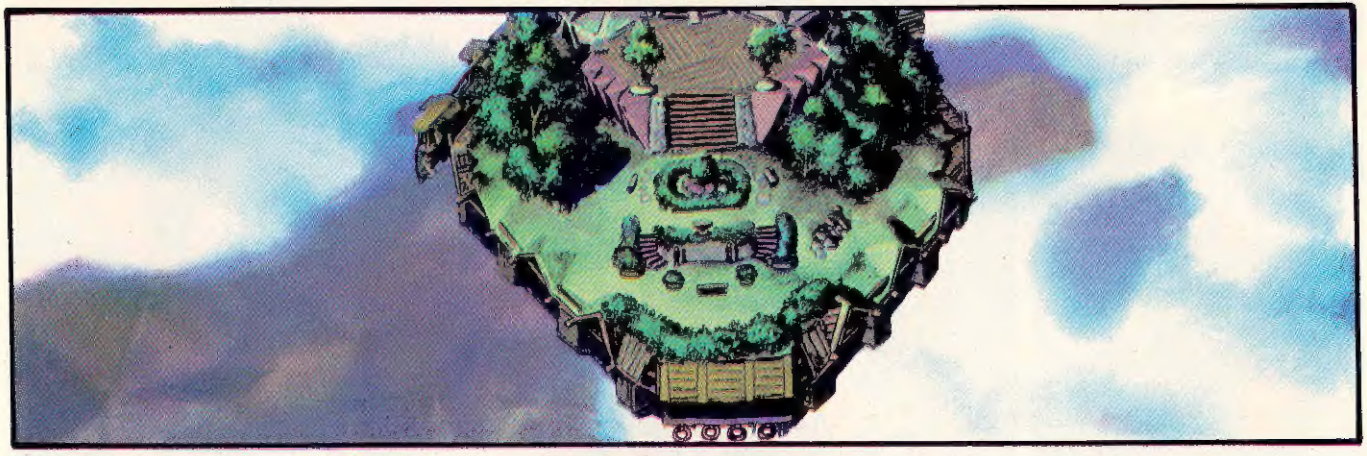
And finally, for the record, I do not want to kill anybody and I do not want to beat up anyone.

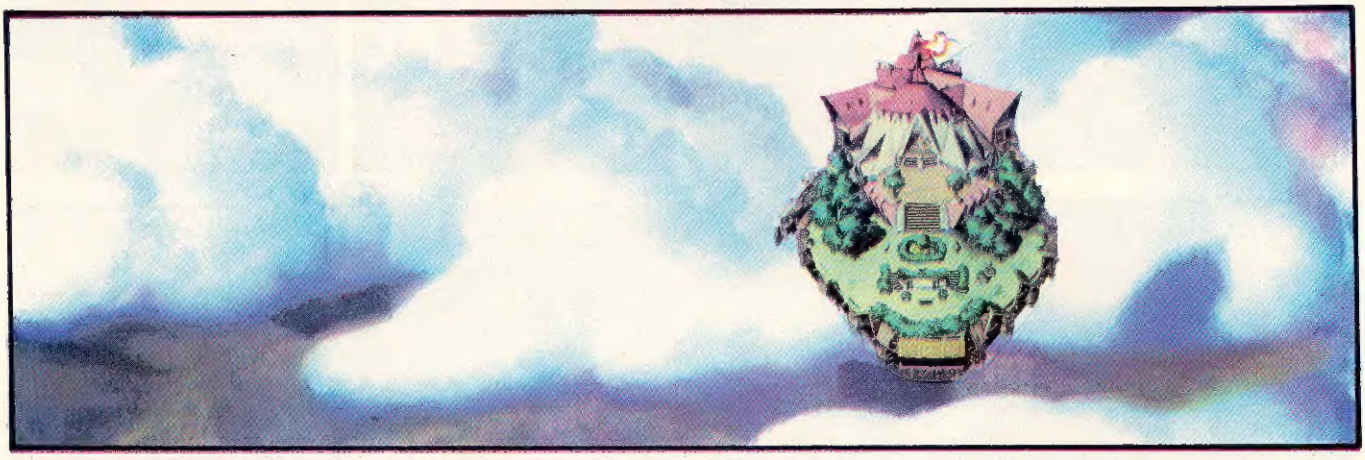
Richard Corben


DEN II
HEAVY METAL
© 1980, Richard Corben

Kath, what's wrong? I just want to play around like we used to.
No, David, I'm not a toy. And don't call me **Kath**. My name is Katherine. From now on I want to be called Katherine or Kathy.
Well, my name is **DEN**, not David. David Ellis Norman is ancient history.
I wish you'd grow up and stop playing out your fantasies.
It seems to me you've got some strange fantasies yourself. But do I complain? **NOOOOOOOO!**
And what do you mean by that?
Your hair, for one thing. It used to be so long and beautiful—
Look, Buster, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Besides that, my hair is my own personal property, so don't tell me how to wear my hair.
What about these clothes? Why do we have to wear clothes that cover everything?
So, Mister **Pervert** doesn't like to wear clothes, eh? He likes to go around with everything hanging out. Where I come from, you'd be arrested for that.
I just like to look at you. You used to like to look at me.


Well, I don't now. Your appearance communicates your personality, and, David, before I started dressing you you looked...so big, so arrogant and pugnacious, so dominant ...You looked like some overdeveloped, super breeding **stud.**
Am I so arrogant? Or any of those other things? ...**Hey,** what's wrong with being a stud? You used to like me to be a stud. You used to love me. I haven't changed. You've changed.
Yes, I've changed, David. I'm not the same person I was. I was a child. Then I thought it was all right to be your plaything and do anything you wanted me to. I've grown in the years we've been here.
I'm an adult, a real person. I do what I want now, not what anyone else tells me to do.
I guess you don't much care for Neverwhere either.
That's right, David. I'd give anything to get out of this insane male-oriented nightmare.



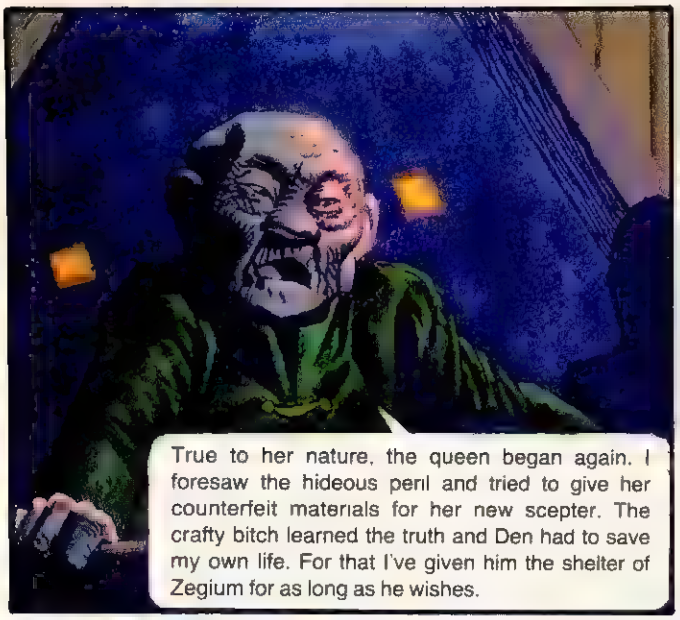


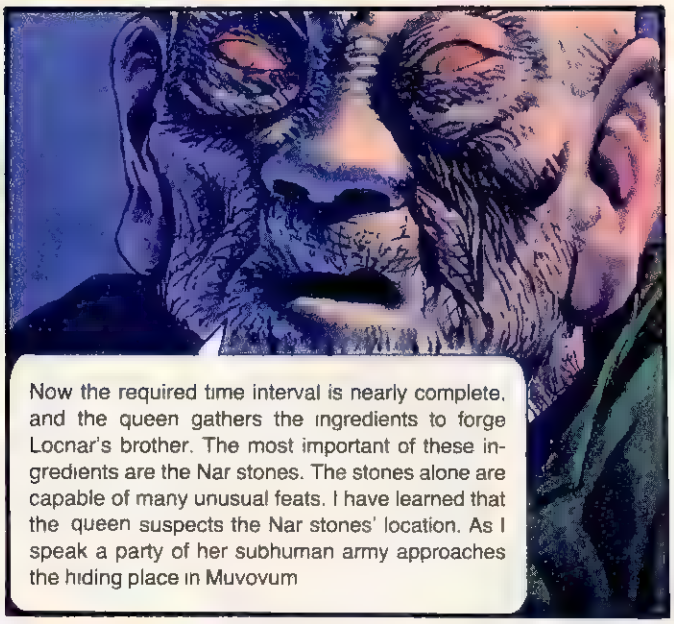
There's Zegium, Grandfather. You were right. The wind has carried it further south than when we left.
Yes, the lode metal hasn't much guiding power anymore.

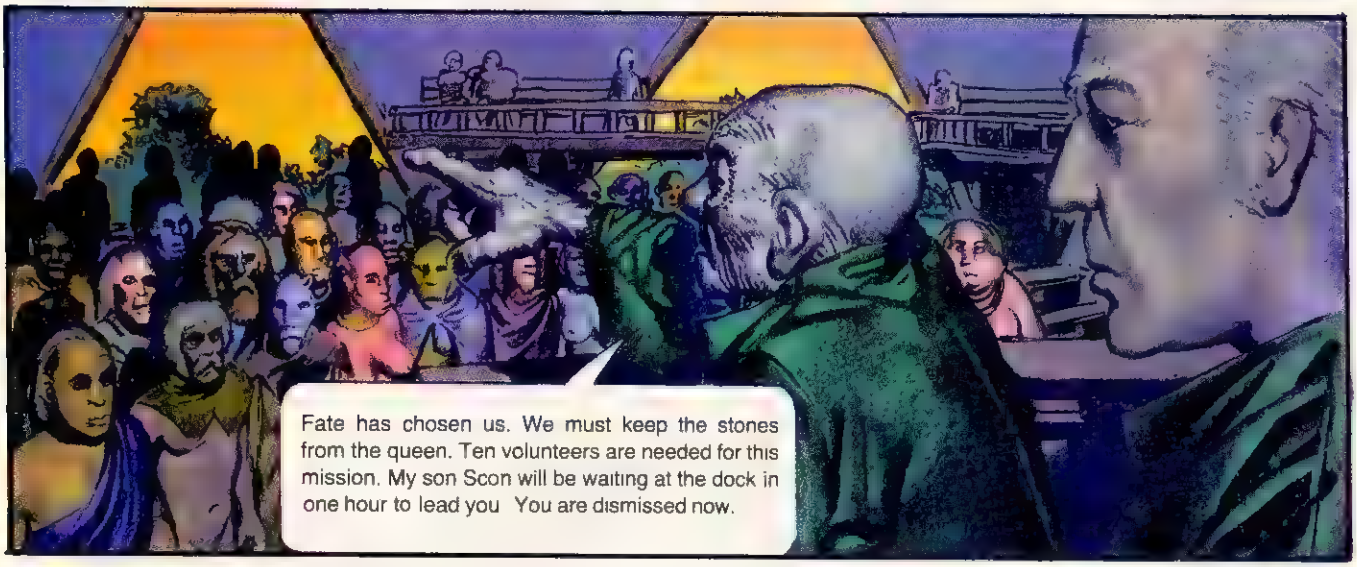
We must waste no time. I've got to study my old maps of Muvovum.
The runes foretold that the evil queen has learned of the Nar stones' hiding place through some magic spell. That woman has some troops searching for the abandoned Dramite hive even now.
Tarn, we're in deep trouble if she succeeds with her plans.

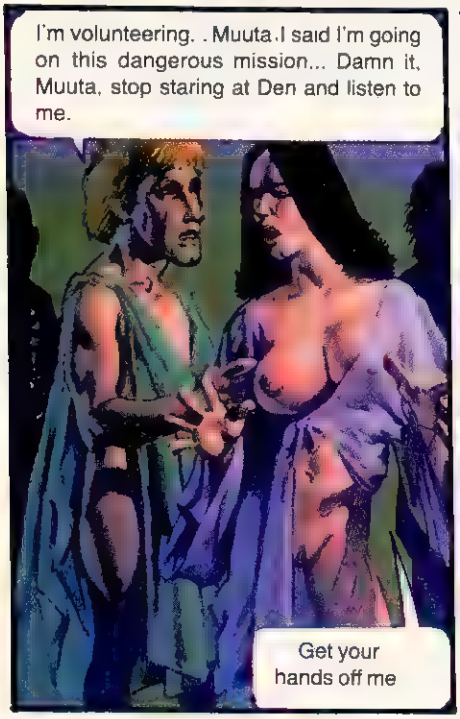
DONNG
DONNG
DONNG
There! Zeg is back. He said he'd have something important to tell us.
Muuta, see! I brought Grandfather back without a hitch. A perfect chauffeured flight.
Yes, Tarn. We're all proud that you didn't fall.
Let go of me. I can manage.
Scon, come with me to the study. We've some vital matters to discuss.
Yes, Father.
Tarn, tell everyone there will be a meeting within the hour in the main hall.
Yes, Grandfather.

He was most anxious about something he discovered in the Rune Vaults. We'll soon know.
Den and Kath have been fighting again. Look! What's he doing?
He's taking his clothes off.
I've never seen him nude, since I came here
Muuta, you don't want to see him naked!
I think I do. Wuff!
Give me your attention, please. We have a very grave matter at hand. But first, a short review. Nearly four years ago, the self-appointed queen of Neverwhere possessed the Locnar, a scepter of incredible magic power.
With it she sought to bring the cosmic demon god, Uluhtc, into this world to magnify her strength a thousandfold. Thanks to our honored guest Den, the cataclysm was averted and the scepter destroyed.

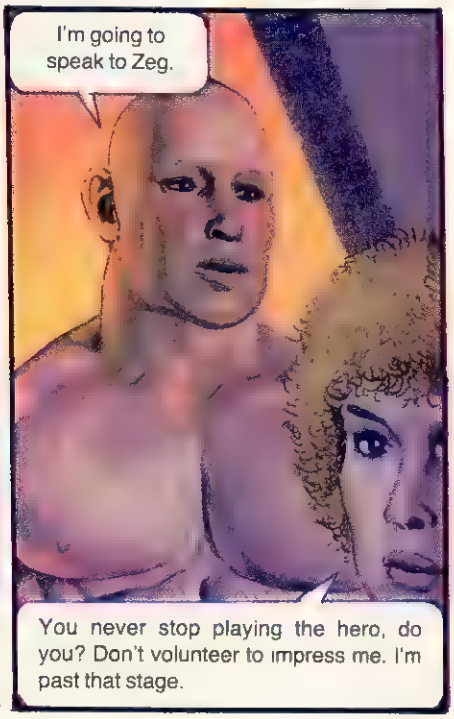

True to her nature, the queen began again. I foresaw the hideous peril and tried to give her counterfeit materials for her new scepter. The crafty bitch learned the truth and Den had to save my own life. For that I've given him the shelter of Zegium for as long as he wishes.

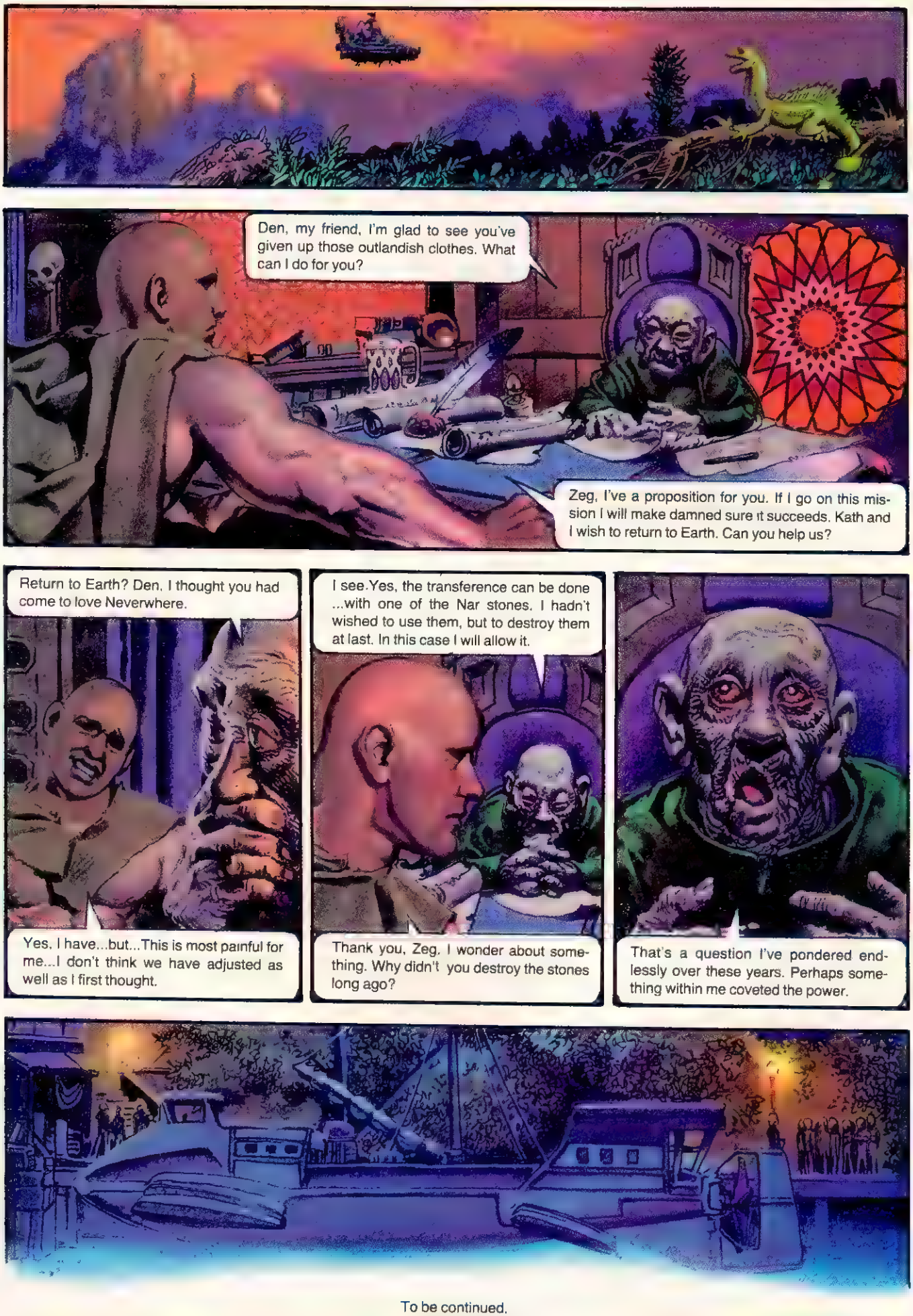

Now the required time interval is nearly complete, and the queen gathers the ingredients to forge Locnar's brother. The most important of these ingredients are the Nar stones. The stones alone are capable of many unusual feats. I have learned that the queen suspects the Nar stones' location. As I speak a party of her subhuman army approaches the hiding place in Muvovum


Fate has chosen us. We must keep the stones from the queen. Ten volunteers are needed for this mission. My son Scon will be waiting at the dock in one hour to lead you You are dismissed now.


I'm volunteering. . Muuta.I said I'm going on this dangerous mission... Damn it, Muuta, stop staring at Den and listen to me.
Get your hands off me

Aww, Muuta, we are to be betrothed. I wish you would think about that and be nice to me.
That was to be a political arrangement I was discussing with old Zeg. It is not final. I'm not sure the proposed alliance is worth putting up with you for.


I'm going to speak to Zeg.
You never stop playing the hero, do you? Don't volunteer to impress me. I'm past that stage.


Den, my friend, I'm glad to see you've given up those outlandish clothes. What can I do for you?
Zeg, I've a proposition for you. If I go on this mission I will make damned sure it succeeds. Kath and I wish to return to Earth. Can you help us?
Return to Earth? Den, I thought you had come to love Neverwhere.
Yes, I have...but...This is most painful for me...I don't think we have adjusted as well as I first thought.
I see.Yes, the transference can be done ...with one of the Nar stones. I hadn't wished to use them, but to destroy them at last. In this case I will allow it.
Thank you, Zeg. I wonder about something. Why didn't you destroy the stones long ago?
That's a question I've pondered endlessly over these years. Perhaps something within me coveted the power.

To be continued.

THE IMMORTALS' FETE

The "immortal" Horus, having incorporated himself into the flesh of the very mortal Nikopol, has taken the occasion of a public hockey match to execute his plan for overthrowing the Parisian government. As number 23 on the Bratislava team, he does indeed succeed in accomplishing some kind of coup, while his fellow "immortals" look on from the safety of their pyramid, parked above the city.

LET'S SEE, CHÉPRI, HORUS MIGHT HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME SORT OF MENTAL DISFUNCTION THAT WE ARE UNAWARE OF. HE CAN'T HAVE VIOLATED THE ETHIC OF THE ALMIGHTY THIS FAR.
KLING
THAT WOULD BE UNPRECEDENTED IN OUR HISTORY.
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH HIM, EVEN DEMATERIALIZATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF AN INFERIOR AND MORTAL BEING. I AM AFRAID HORUS HAS GONE CRAZY, NOBLE FRIENDS..
KLING
I AGREE. DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING BANGING AGAINST OUR SHIP?
IT SEEMS TO BE SOME KIND OF METALLIC NOISE.
21:38.. HALF TIME. THE TCHESCOSOVIETS ARE AHEAD, SEVEN TO FOUR.
NOW FOR PHASE II...
16
CCCP 23
CCCP 18
21:39 .AN ANGRY JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBLANC QUICKLY LEAVES THE OFFICIAL TRIBUNAL..
21:40.. END OF THE TELEVISED TRANSMISSION...
BEWARE, FRIENDS, OF THE UNIVERSAL HEAVENS; HORUS'S CLEVERNESS IS EQUAL TO HIS CRAZINESS...
OBVIOUSLY, THIS IRRITATING NOISE ISN'T GOING TO STOP
BES! GO FIND OUT WHAT'S CAUSING IT!
THE NIGHT AIR PROMISES TO BE HEAVY AND HUMID.. BLOWN HERE AND THERE BY SULPHUROUS WINDS...

22:01.. NEWS FLASH...

FLASH SPECIAL

PROUD PARISIANS, GOOD EVENING. A GLIMPSE OF EXCEPTIONAL THEATER CAME ABOUT AT THE END OF THE HOCKEY MATCH BETWEEN PARIS AND BRATISLAVA, A DRAMATIC POLITICAL TURN OF EVENTS THAT DOES GREAT HONOR TO OUR FASCIST IDEOLOGY AND TO OUR GOVERNOR, JEAN-FERDINAND CHOUBLANC.

MR MINISTER, YOU ATTENDED THIS UNPRECEDENTED EVENT. CAN YOU TELL US WHAT HAPPENED?

WELL, IT'S VERY SIMPLE... THE TWO TEAMS WERE LEAVING THE RINK ON THEIR WAY BACK TO THEIR LOCKER ROOMS, WHEN ONE OF THE TCHESCOSOVIETS SUCCEEDED IN KNOCKING OUT ONE OF OUR SECURITY GUARDS AND GRABBING HOLD OF A MICROPHONE. HE THEN USED IT TO DEMAND POLITICAL ASYLUM OF THE PARISIAN GOVERNMENT.

J.R. PHORMHOLTZ
MINISTER OF YOUTH AND PROPAGANDA

FOR OUR VIEWING AUDIENCE TONIGHT, WE HAVE FOOTAGE OF THIS SURPRISE POLITICAL INTERRUPTION...

MY PARISIAN COMRADES, LISTEN TO ME! I CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEFEAT OF YOUR TEAM, AND YOUR DISAPPOINTMENT MUST BE GREAT. BUT IF MY CONVICTION WAS GREAT...

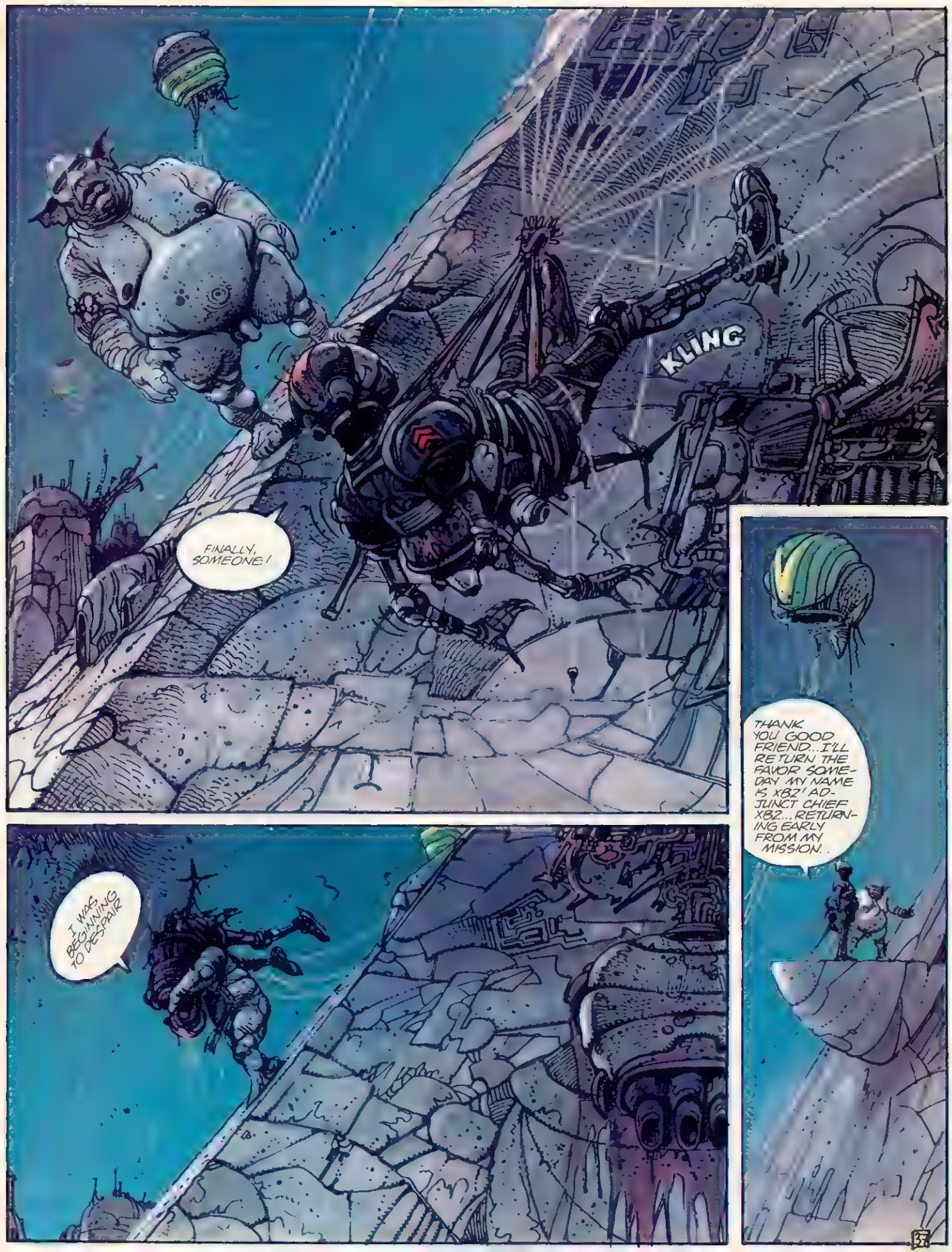
..DURING THIS BITTER COMBAT, IT IS EVEN GREATER NOW AT THIS VERY MOMENT, AS I DARE TO DEFY MY OWN PEOPLE AND THEIR ARCHAIC REGIME IN PUBLIC. I AM PLEADING FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM!

KLING

DID YOU HEAR THAT?

YES.. AN ATTITUDE THAT CAN ONLY CONFIRM OUR SUSPICIONS...

BUT BES HASN'T RETURNED..


KLING
FINALLY, SOMEONE!
I WAS BEGINNING TO DESPAIR
THANK YOU GOOD FRIEND...I'LL RETURN THE FAVOR SOMEDAY MY NAME IS XB2' ADJUNCT CHIEF XB2...RETURNING EARLY FROM MY MISSION..
37

RESOUNDING K.O. POLITICS! 2 VICTIMS! TRAITOR VERTEGOUTTE AND TCHESCOSOVIETISM!

K.O. POLITIQUE RETENTISSANT
MAJEURES : LE TRAÎTRE
ÉSCOSOVIÉTISME!!!

DEUX
VERTEGOUTTE E

CHOUBLANQUISME TRIOMPH

THE LEGAL VOICE
TRIUMPHANT CHOUBLANCIST
AN EXCEPTIONAL NIGHT AT THE PALACE OF SPORTS AND CONGRESS
DESPITE THE DEFEAT OF OUR TEAM, CHOUBLANCISM REMAINS POLITICALLY IN FORCE. IDEOLOGY BECOMES
RAMPANT AMONG PLAYERS AND SPORTS FANS ALIKE. TALK OF THE DEATH OF THE TRAITOR VERTEGOUTTE,
AND OF THE DEMAND FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM BY A TCHESCOSOVIET HOCKEY PLAYER, FILLS THE ARENA

Soirée ex

des Congrès, d'où, malgré une
nos couleurs, le Choublanquisme sort
déologiquement grandi par deux faits cinglants :
egoutte, le traître abject, dans l'attentat qu'il destinait au
la demande d'asile politique et le rejet de son régime « archaïque » d'un
hockeyeur tchescosoviet.

reportages et photos
en pages 2 et 3

SENS DE L'HONN

Pierre-Hubert Burbu
ches Noires de P
les toilettes
Congr
ports et des
mpaler sur une
défaite. »
nt âgé de 33 ans.

SENSE OF HONOR
THIRTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD PIERRE HUBERT BURBUTZ, TRAINER OF THE
PARISIAN BLACK ARROWS, WAS FOUND DEAD LAST NIGHT AFTER AN
APPARENT SUICIDE. BEFORE IMPALING HIMSELF ON A HOCKEY
STICK, HE CRIED OUT, "DEATH RATHER THAN DEFEAT."

FAITS DIVERS

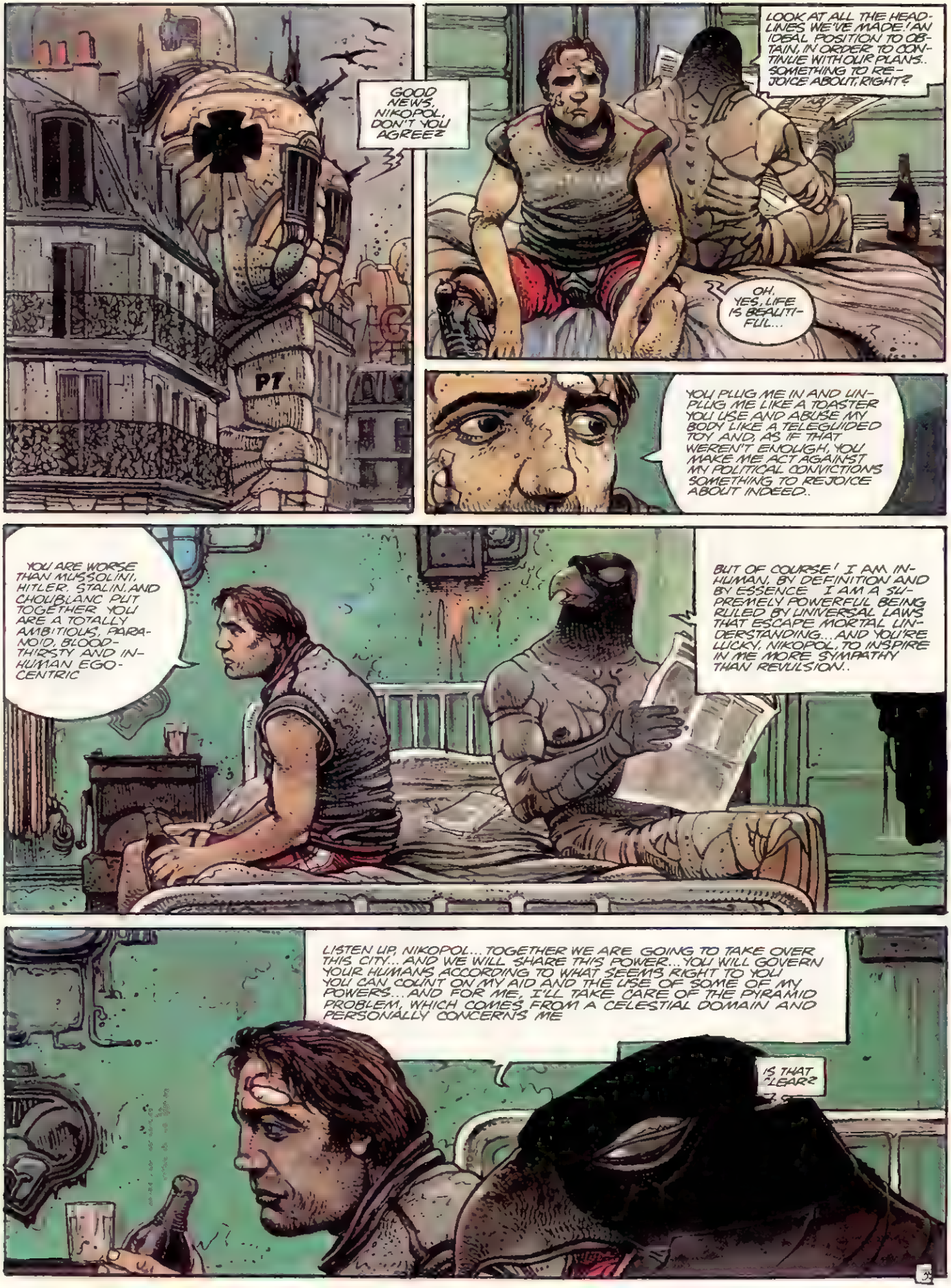
UN MILICIEN DÉVORÉ
PAR UN ŒUF DE
MENKAR NON CU

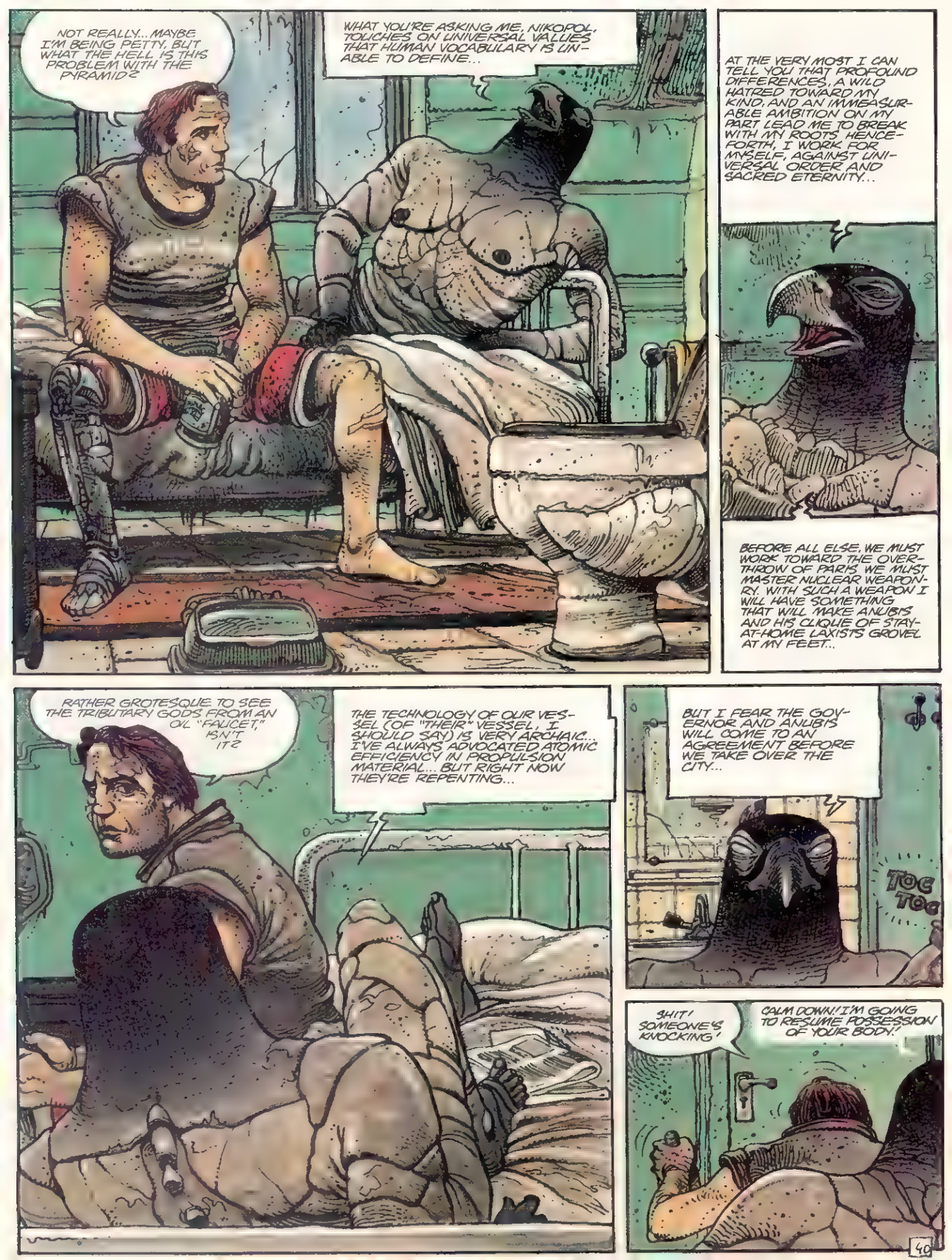
Un accident aussi stupide que
un dépôt d'œufs durs
second arrondiss
Interrogé
hau

NEWS ITEMS
SOLDIER DEVOURED BY UNCOOKED
MENKAR EGG.

fut devant
fait en un temps record
Caporal milicien Ernest Robinet
averse pour déterminer clairement les
de cette déplorable affaire.

AUTHOR'S NOTE. ALAS, THE "POPULAR RESISTANCE" WILL NO LONGER APPEAR, ITS SOLE EDITOR-PRINTER-DISTRIBUTOR HAVING BEEN ONE OF THE UNFORTUNATE VICTIMS OF THE CRAZY MENKAR EGG.

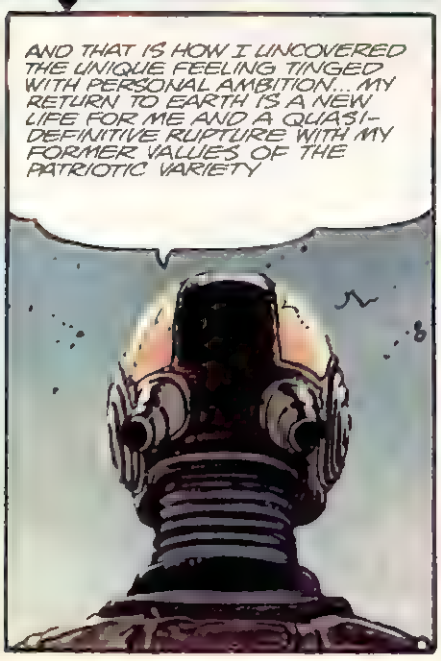

GOOD NEWS, NIKOPOL, DON'T YOU AGREE?
P7
LOOK AT ALL THE HEADLINES WE'VE MADE! AN IDEAL POSITION TO OBTAIN, IN ORDER TO CONTINUE WITH OUR PLANS.. SOMETHING TO REJOICE ABOUT, RIGHT?
OH, YES, LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL...
YOU PLUG ME IN AND UNPLUG ME LIKE A TOASTER YOU USE AND ABUSE MY BODY LIKE A TELEGUIDED TOY AND, AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH, YOU MAKE ME ACT AGAINST MY POLITICAL CONVICTIONS SOMETHING TO REJOICE ABOUT INDEED..
YOU ARE WORSE THAN MUSSOLINI, HITLER, STALIN, AND CHOUBLANC PUT TOGETHER. YOU ARE A TOTALLY AMBITIOUS, PARANOID, BLOODTHIRSTY AND INHUMAN EGOCENTRIC
BUT OF COURSE! I AM INHUMAN, BY DEFINITION AND BY ESSENCE. I AM A SUPREMELY POWERFUL BEING RULED BY UNIVERSAL LAWS THAT ESCAPE MORTAL UNDERSTANDING... AND YOU'RE LUCKY, NIKOPOL, TO INSPIRE IN ME MORE SYMPATHY THAN REVULSION..
LISTEN UP, NIKOPOL... TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO TAKE OVER THIS CITY... AND WE WILL SHARE THIS POWER... YOU WILL GOVERN YOUR HUMANS ACCORDING TO WHAT SEEMS RIGHT TO YOU. YOU CAN COUNT ON MY AID AND THE USE OF SOME OF MY POWERS... AND FOR ME, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE PYRAMID PROBLEM, WHICH COMES FROM A CELESTIAL DOMAIN AND PERSONALLY CONCERNS ME
IS THAT CLEAR?

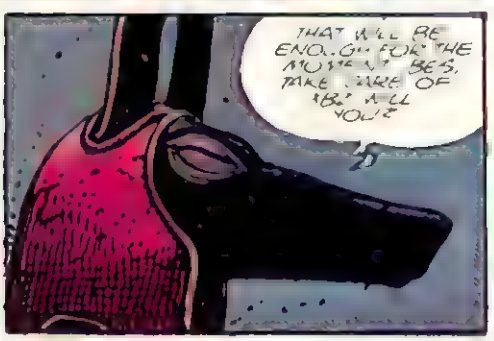

NOT REALLY... MAYBE I'M BEING PETTY, BUT WHAT THE HELL IS THIS PROBLEM WITH THE PYRAMID?
WHAT YOU'RE ASKING ME, NIKOPOL, TOUCHES ON UNIVERSAL VALUES THAT HUMAN VOCABULARY IS UNABLE TO DEFINE...
AT THE VERY MOST I CAN TELL YOU THAT PROFOUND DIFFERENCES, A WILD HATRED TOWARD MY KIND, AND AN IMMEASURABLE AMBITION ON MY PART LEAD ME TO BREAK WITH MY ROOTS. HENCEFORTH, I WORK FOR MYSELF, AGAINST UNIVERSAL ORDER AND SACRED ETERNITY...
BEFORE ALL ELSE, WE MUST WORK TOWARD THE OVERTHROW OF PARIS. WE MUST MASTER NUCLEAR WEAPONRY. WITH SUCH A WEAPON I WILL HAVE SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE ANUBIS AND HIS CLIQUE OF STAY-AT-HOME LAXISTS GROVEL AT MY FEET...
RATHER GROTESQUE TO SEE THE TRIBUTARY GODS FROM AN OIL "FAUCET," ISN'T IT?
THE TECHNOLOGY OF OUR VESSEL (OF "THEIR" VESSEL, I SHOULD SAY) IS VERY ARCHAIC... I'VE ALWAYS ADVOCATED ATOMIC EFFICIENCY IN PROPULSION MATERIAL... BUT RIGHT NOW THEY'RE REPENTING...
BUT I FEAR THE GOVERNOR AND ANUBIS WILL COME TO AN AGREEMENT BEFORE WE TAKE OVER THE CITY...
TOC TOC
SHIT! SOMEONE'S KNOCKING!
CALM DOWN! I'M GOING TO RESUME POSSESSION OF YOUR BODY!

VLOUFFF
WERE YOU TALKING TO YOURSELF?
UH.. NO I I WAS RECITING A POEM BY BAUDELAIRE I LIKE HIM VERY MUCH.. DON'T YOU?
"REMEMBER THE OBJECT THAT WE SAW, MY SOUL, THAT BEAUTIFUL SOFT SUMMER MORNING? AT THE END OF A BRIDLEPATH, A VILE CARRION ON A BED SOWN WITH..."
ENOUGH! WASH AND SHAVE AND PUT ON THESE CLOTHES! THE GOVERNOR WANTS TO INTRODUCE YOU TO THE PRESS...
WELL ACTED, NIKOPOL.
HIDE YOUR LEG!
TOC TOC TOC
AHEM! COME IN!
AT THE SAME MOMENT· THE SECOND WARD, ALESIA QUARTER, IN THE CEMETERY/SUPER-MARKET...
YOU AGAIN, MR. NIKOPOL?
?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU WERE HERE YESTERDAY, MR. NIKOPOL! DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
NO! I DON'T REMEMBER COMING HERE YESTERDAY, MY POOR GORGON.

ONCE AGAIN, AT THE SAME MOMENT, BUT IN THE PYRAMID
AND WHY COME TO EARTH WITHOUT THE ORDER OF YOUR SUPERIOR, XBZ?
THE RADIO CONTACTS HAVE BEEN CUT FOR MORE THAN EIGHTEEN YEARS... THE "NIKOPOL-HIBERNATION" EXPERIMENT WAS "IN THE WATER" AGES AGO...

MOREOVER THIRTY YEARS OF SOLITUDE IN THE EMPTINESS OF SPACE FORCES ANY NORMAL HUMAN BEING TO ASK HIMSELF FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS CONDITION AND HIS EXISTENCE.


AND THAT IS HOW I UNCOVERED THE UNIQUE FEELING TINGED WITH PERSONAL AMBITION... MY RETURN TO EARTH IS A NEW LIFE FOR ME AND A QUASI-DEFINITIVE RUPTURE WITH MY FORMER VALUES OF THE PATRIOTIC VARIETY



THIS ROBOT DISPLEASES ME ENORMOUSLY, BUT MAYBE HE COULD HELP US OBTAIN THE FUEL THAT THIS MISERABLE CHOUBLANC REFUSES US. AND THAT HE WILL CONTINUE TO REFUSE US IF HE IS RE-ELECTED
HOW DO YOU MEAN, BASTET DEAR?
BY BEING ELECTED GOVERNOR HIMSELF

TO BE CONTINUED

A.C.E.

(AUTONOMOUS COMBAT EQUIPMENT)

HEATING CHANNEL

OPAQUE, IRON-PLATED VISOR

PHOTOGRAPHIC CAMERA LENS

QUARTZ REFLECTOR

FOOD TUBES

INTRAVENOUS SERUM DEPOSIT

LEATHER GUN-SUPPORT STRAP

FILTER SYSTEM

PRIMARY ATMOSPHERIC OXYGEN FOR CONTAMINATED AREAS

RUBBER GUARDS MADE WITH STEEL

BOOTS WITH FRONTAL SHIELDS

SHIELD CONSISTING OF STRENGTHENED RESIN WITH GRAPHITE FIBERS, COVERED IN A LIGHT STEEL ALLOY

MINICAMERA VTR

VISOR BREECH

ASSAULT GUN MKM. 190 CAL. 15.80 MM. WITH ELECTRONIC PROJECTILE DOUBLE INFRARED SIGHT

DISPOSABLE SYNTHETIC RUBBER SHOES

ENCEPHALON COMMANDO ANTENNA

ELECTRONIC BRAIN

TELESCOPIC RADIO-SIGNAL ANTENNA

SECONDARY PRESSURIZED OXYGEN SYSTEM FOR MAXIMUM CONTAMINATION

AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEM

MICRO ATOMIC BATTERY

SURVIVAL SYSTEM AND SPARE AMMUNITION

war III

INFANTRYMEN!
INFANTRYMEN!

JIMENEZ

WAR 1

THE ZONE WAS VERY HOT: LEVEL 11.16 ON THE PARKER SCALE. THE "IRBM" PROJECTILE, WITH ITS THERMONUCLEAR READING OF TWENTY MEGATONS, EXPLODED NOT TWO HOURS AGO.

THE INTELLIGENCE COMPUTER INDICATED A 78 PERCENT PROBABILITY OF ENEMY ATTACK. TO PROTECT THIS SECTOR, THE INFANTRYMEN WILL BE THERE, PREPARED TO BLOCK ANY ATTEMPT TO INFILTRATE.

NEITHER ATOMIC BOMBS NOR ROCKETRY NOR CYBERNETICS COULD OBLITERATE FROM THE BATTLEFIELDS THE COURAGEOUS FOOT SOLDIERS WHO ARE INDISPENSABLE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF VICTORY.

THE BIOSENSOR HAS PICKED UP ENEMY ACTIVITY IN COORDINATES "ALICIA" AND 44...

AT LESS THAN 1,000 METERS FROM WHERE OUR PATROL IS. PERFECT! PROGRAM THE SAME INTERCEPTION!

SEN.

WAR2

THEY MET WITH ENEMY FIRE AT "ALICIA" AND 50.

THE A.C.E. RECEPTOR PICKS UP AT THIS MOMENT THE RADIO SIGNAL SENT FROM THE "COMPUTERIZED STRATEGY COMMANDER."

NX

2152234

R

BEEEEEEEEP!

...A RELAY WAS THEN ACTIVATED, LIBERATING AN ELECTRICAL IMPULSE THROUGH ONE OF THE PROBES, WHICH WAS INJECTED INTO THE CRANIAL CAVITY OF THE INFANTRYMAN...

...A DEFINITE NERVOUS REACTION HIT BEFORE THE STIMULATION. BRAK BRAKTOR, INFANTRY SOLDIER, SERIAL NUMBER R.A. 2152234 BC, FELT AN ACUTE PAIN IN THE LEFT SIDE OF THE TEMPLE, TOGETHER WITH HIS NINETEEN COMPANIONS.

WAR 3

THERE EXISTS ONLY ONE WAY TO ALLEVIATE THE PAIN, AND THAT IS TO TURN TO THE RIGHT...

BC

WHEN THE PAIN LIFTS, THE TROOP KNOWS THAT THEY ARE HEADING IN THE CORRECT DIRECTION...

RA

RA

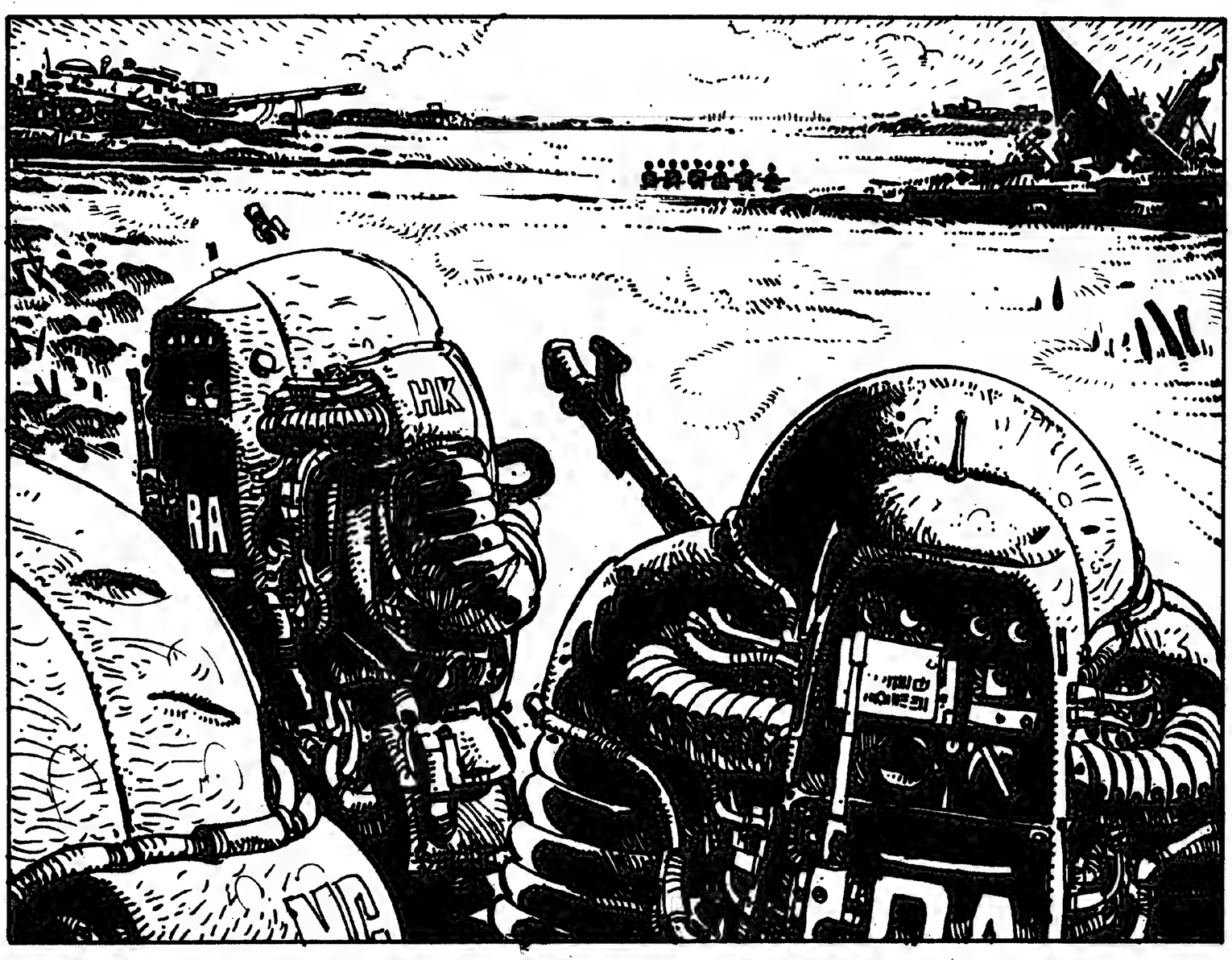
...AND PROCEED AFTERWARDS STRAIGHT TO THE COORDINATES "ALICIA" AND 50...

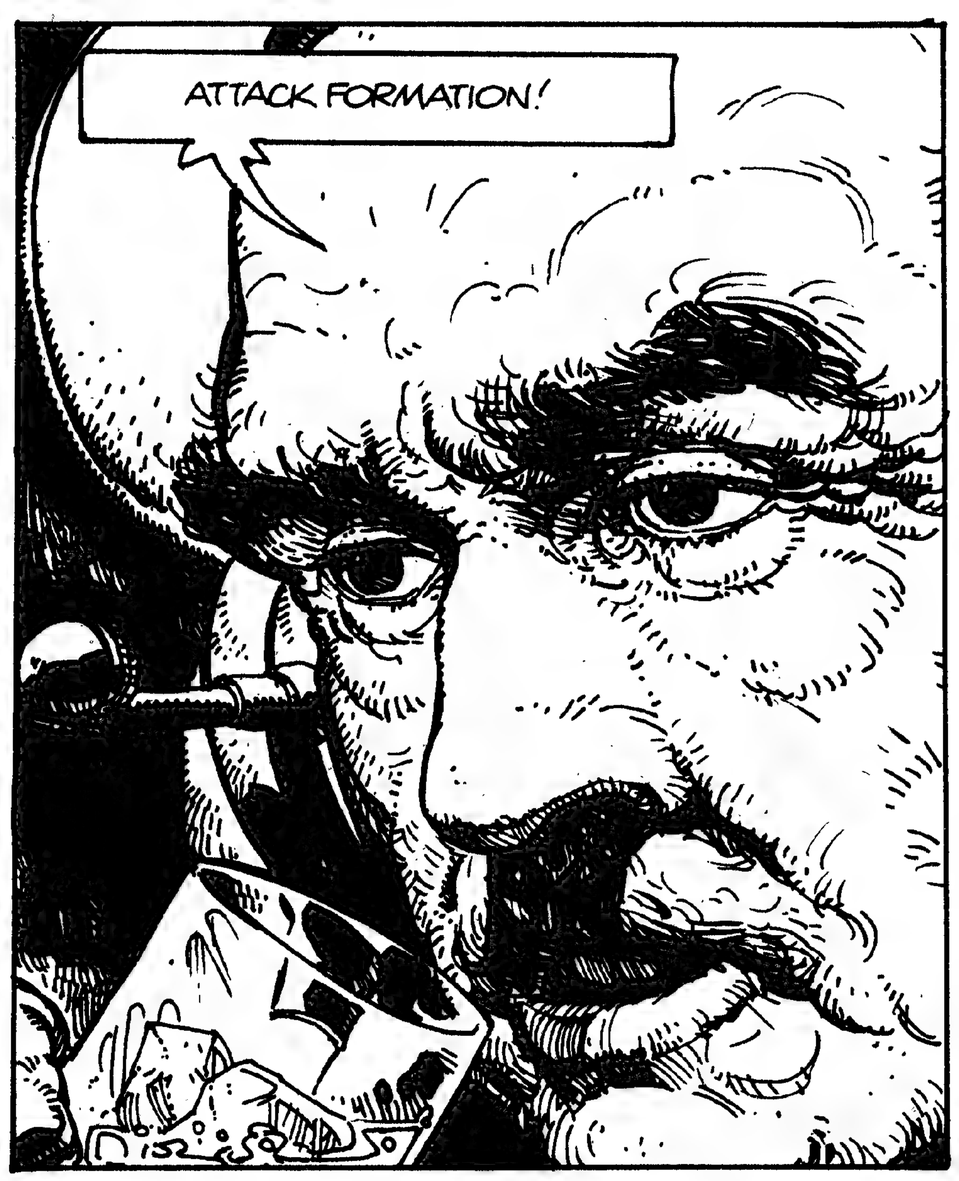
THE ENEMY IS INCREASING THE VELOCITY OF DISPLACEMENT. ORDER OUR MEN TO GO QUICKLY, OR THEY WON'T GET THERE ON TIME!

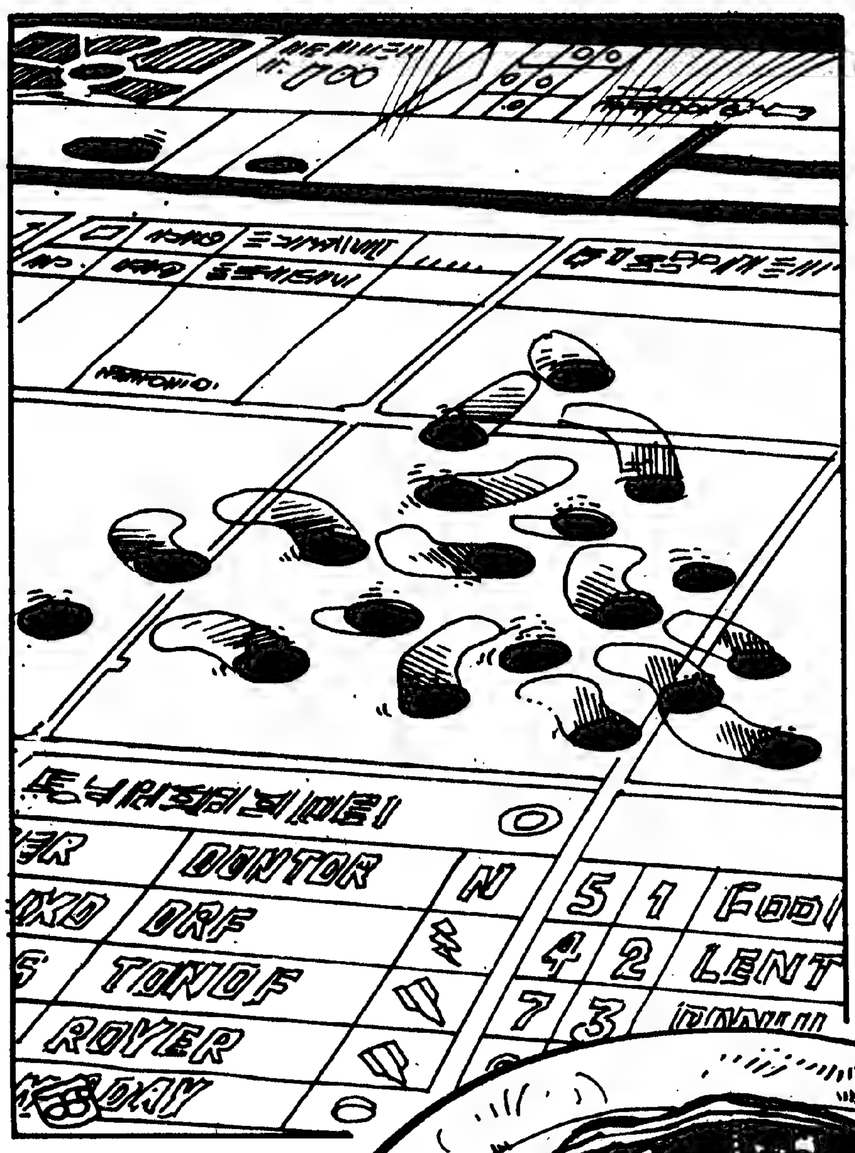
...A NEW RADIO SIGNAL IS BROADCAST, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY THE TWENTY INFANTRYMEN WILL BEGIN TO HUSTLE TO THEIR NEWLY ASSIGNED POSTS.

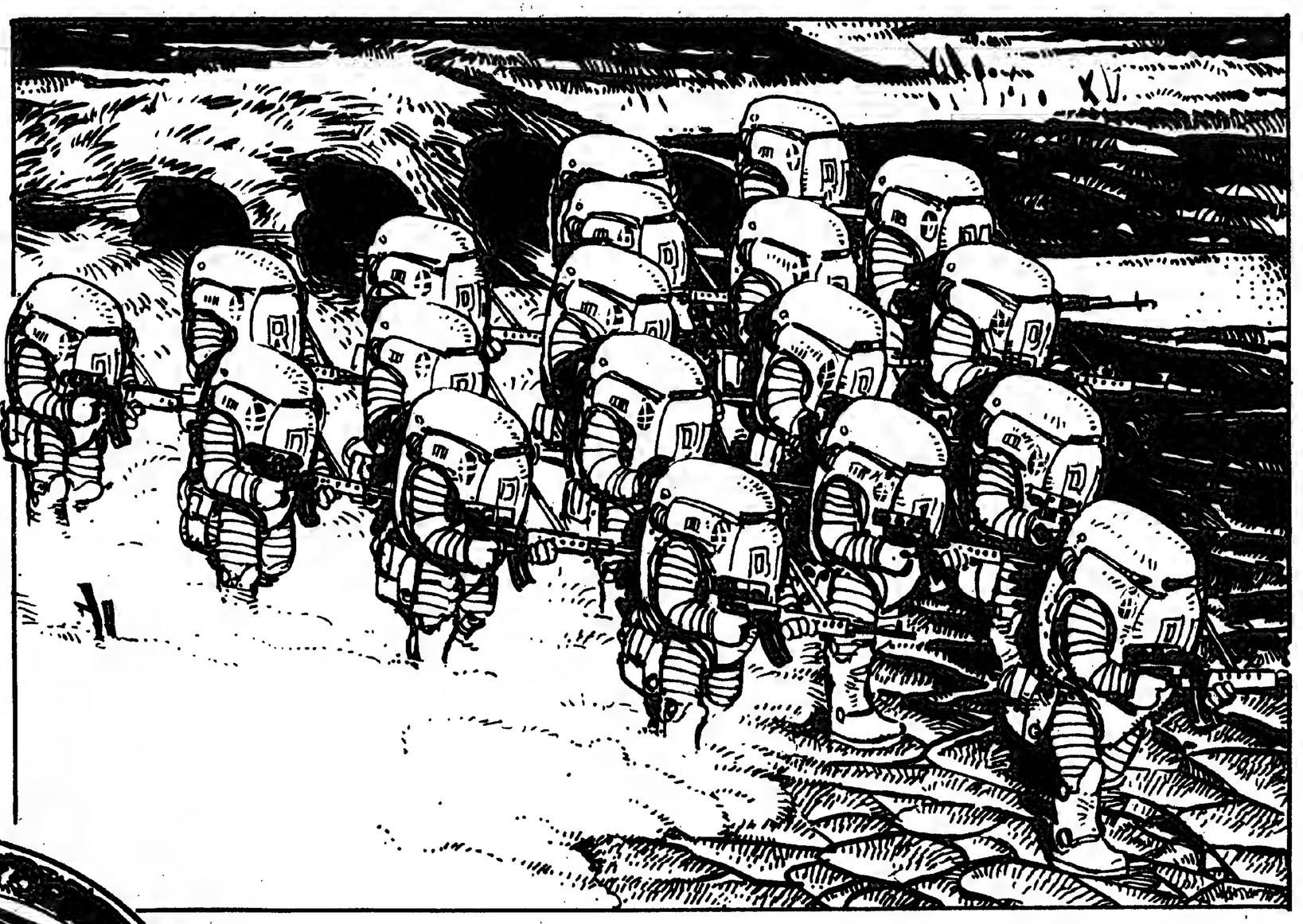
COMPANY TO THE POINT OF INTERCEPTION AT THE COORDINATES "ALICIA" AND 50.

WAR 4


HK
RA


ATTACK FORMATION!





3111 2195

STIMULATE COMMANDOS TO THE MAXIMUM!
WAR5

BEEEEEEP!

21:53:14

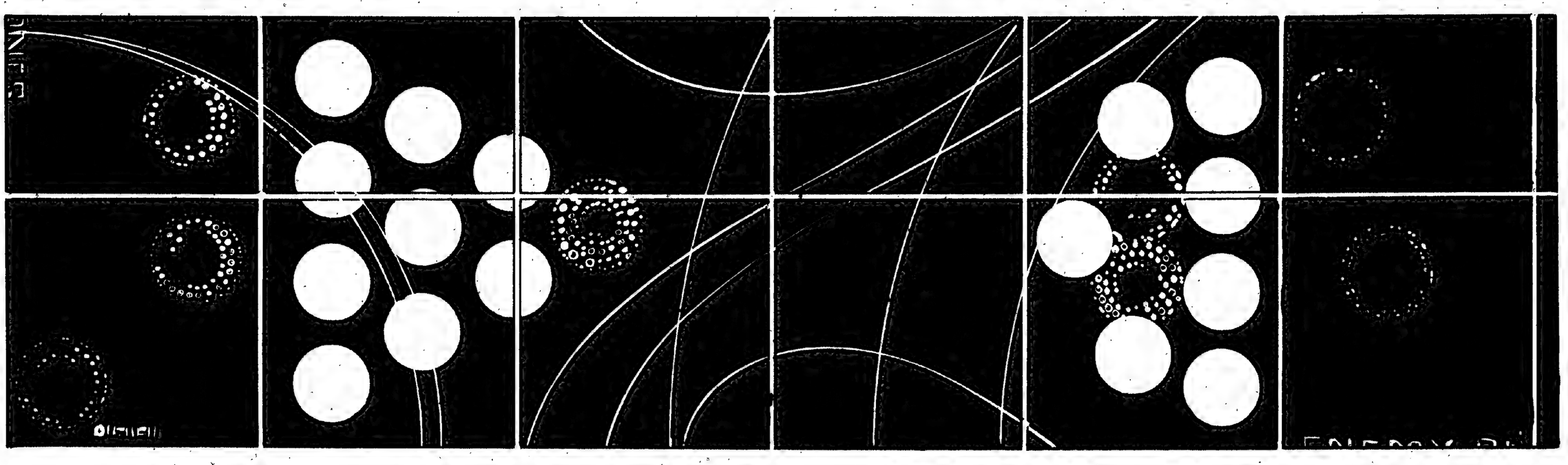
FIRE!

47671

¡BLAM! ¡BLAM!

WAR G

JIMENEZ



CASUALTIES ADD UP TO ABOUT 45 PERCENT IN OUR FORCE, COLONEL!
WAR 7

...POSITION ATTAINED... INCREASE VELOCITY OF FIRE...

BLAM BLA MI BLA

BEEEEEEEEEEEEP!!

TUNIC

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

ATTUEN!

TUNG!

SHAG!

ENG!

BLAM!

NNG!

SH

WAR 8

THE COMBAT LASTED EXACTLY THIRTY-EIGHT AND THREE-FIFTHS SECONDS...

ENEMY ACTIVITY ZERO. WE ARE VICTORIOUS!!!

RA 21534 t
IN ACTION

ENEMY STOP

ROBOTS! DAMNED PIGS! THEY DON'T RESPECT ANYTHING! THEY'VE LOST ALL MILITARY HONOR!

WARP

YOU ARE A HERO, COLONEL! YOU SHALL BE PROMOTED FOR THIS! YOU HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT A MAGNIFICENT COMBAT!

THANK YOU! NOW, ORDER THE SURVIVORS TO RETURN!

105

BEEEEEEP!

ROBOTS! CAN YOU IMAGINE... AAARRRGGGHH!

INFANTRYMAN BRAKTOR'S RAGE WAS INTERRUPTED ONLY BY A SOUNDING RADIO SIGNAL. A TERRIBLE TOOTHACHE WAS WARNING HIM THAT IT WAS TIME TO RETURN TO THE BASE...

BEEEEEP!

...HE SET OUT ON THE RETURN ROAD...

THE HUMAN "INFANTRYMAN" BRAK BRAKTOR, SERIAL NUMBER 2152234, RETURNED FROM BATTLE...

BRANDEIRO JIMENEZ

WARIO

Night falls rapidly on Torres Prime . and in the shadows of the Crystal Palace, a small murder
HE'S DEAD
FINE. THAT GIVES US MAYBE FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE NEXT TROOP PATROL
NOW, WHERE THE HELL IS PORFIRIO?
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS?
DAMN IT, CRISIS, YOU CALMED ME DOWN. WE DO IT MY WAY. THAT'S IT. NO MORE DISCUSSION
HERE'S PORFIRIO
SHIELD YOUR EYES. THE FUSE IS RATHER. .
SHORT.
CODY STARBUCK
When we left Cody, last issue, he had killed his Prometheus-manufactured clone and was off to avenge this too-close-for-comfort deception.
While on his mission, he learnt of the death of his true love, Lady Tessa. She had been executed by Lady Rowena while he was on the planet 1026.
HERE. SMEAR THIS SHIT ON YOUR FACE AND RIP YOUR TUNIC
Several key signals are shouted into the computer lock system of the house barracks and .

MATER, CHRIST! / COMMANDER STARBUCK!
HE'S IN NO SHAPE TO TALK. THERE'S A DAX SUICIDE SQUAD... THEY HIT US IN THE PARK.
THEY WERE HEADED FOR VAT STATION 16.
WE'LL SEAL UP HERE... GET THE GARRISON OUT THERE.
as the streets outside are flooded with light and the clamor of sirens, Starbuck straightens.
BACK-STAIRS. DOUBLE TIME

I'M SORRY COMMANDER YOU ARE NOT RECORDED AS A GUEST AT THIS TIME
PERHAPS IF YOU CALL ON THE DUTY OF-
From this point on it's all Starbuck's game
GUARDS!

Since he had a major hand in the design of Lady Rowena's personal defense system, there are no surprises!
SHE'S TIPPING OUT, CODY!
CLOSE UP HERE
..I'LL GET HER.
For the first time in her sheltered existence, this human embodiment of corruption runs for her life . .
unaware, at this point, of which of her many crimes she is about to die for.
NO, OHGODOHNO, PLEASE. NO, CHRIST, NO, PLEASE, NO, NO...

PLEASE, ANYTHING YOU WANT... I'M SORRY.. WHAT... ANYTHING
SHUT UP! I CAME HERE TO KILL YOU FOR CLONING ME... FOR USING ME AS A TOOL.
I'M SORRY
STOP BLUBBERING! THEN I ARRIVE AND DISCOVER YOU'VE MURDERED THE WOMAN I LOVE!
BUT I'VE KILLED NO ONE.
THE PILGRIMAGE...
WAIT—WE TOOK A SCRAPING OF HER TISSUE—I'LL BUILD YOU A NEW ONE! PLEASE. SHE CAN BE BROUGHT BACK. OH, CODY... PLEASE.
DR. BISHOP IS MY PERSONAL GENETIC ENGINEER HE'LL HANDLE EVERY-THING!
CODY.. ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT WAY?
SHOVE IT, CRISIS I'M CONFUSED AND IRRATIONAL AS IT IS. DON'T PUSH ME. AND KEEP ROWENA COVERED

In the darkened amphitheater, Starbuck, on the brink of insanity, watches the engineers at work . . . an occasional spiral of colored light, the only apparent sign of slow progress
Then, shadow forms emerge from the darkness, and more
Next morning
SHE'S A BIT CONFUSED. TIRED, I'D SAY. BUT SHE'S FINE NO APPARENT TRAUMA
COME, THEN. LET'S LEAVE THESE TWO ALONE FOR A WHILE
Starbuck trembles. For the first time, the madness of the past night leaves him . . .

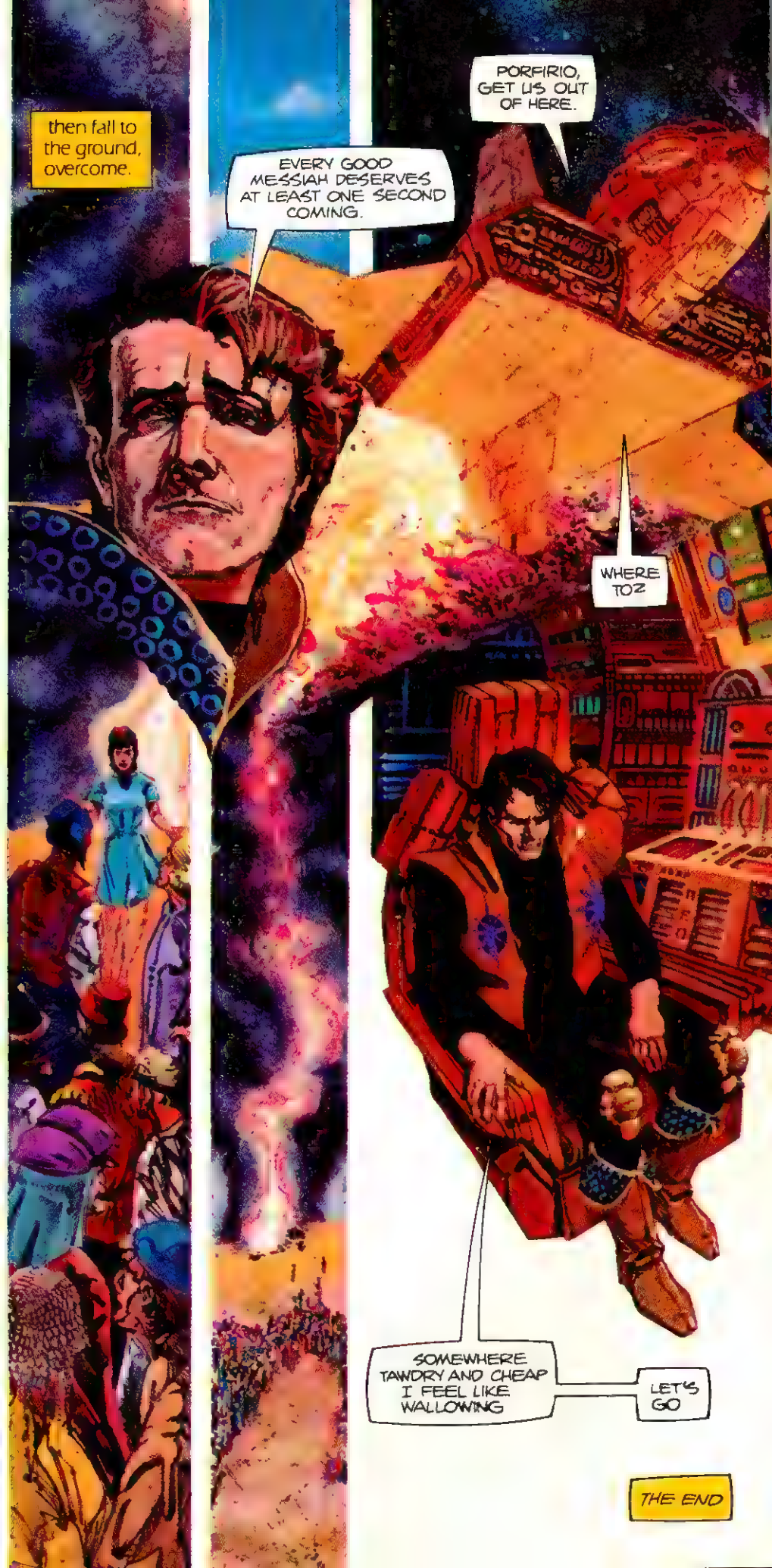
She touches him
A long, lingering kiss . .
And then
YOU ARE WONDERFUL. AND I THINK I LOVE YOU.
I'LL BE BACK IN A MOMENT.
Another, hearing him speak, might have thought he was talking to himself, or to some kind of faith . . .

And, shaking off this temporary insanity, he realizes, in the light of day,
he is talking to himself.
PORFIRIO, DUMP THE BODY DOWN THE INCINERATOR. CRISIS, COVER THE GOOD DOCTOR.
HELLO, CENTRAL? LADY ROWENA WOULD LIKE A NON-PROGRAMMED SYSTEM SENT UP TO HER DAY ROOM IMMEDIATELY.
AS FOR YOU, DR. BISHOP, YOU'VE GOT A PROGRAMMING OPERATION AHEAD OF YOU.
Later .
SHE'LL AWAKEN IN ABOUT AN HOUR, THINKING SHE IS ROWENA.
SEE THAT SHE CONTINUES TO DO SO. FURTHER, SEE THAT ALL REPROGRAMMING I GAVE YOU REMAINS ACTIVE.

IT'S OUR LITTLE SECRET, BISHOP. IF ANYTHING LEAKS OUT...
...OR IF THIS REPLICA GETS WISE.
. I'LL HAVE YOUR ASS. PROMISE. GOOD-BYE, DR. BISHOP

It is an anxious hour, spent traveling to Starpit and taking the Limerick Rake into flight, but . .
NO ALARMS NO SIRENS I GUESS THE DOCTOR IS SMARTER THAN HE LOOKS.
WHAT DO WE DO WITH... HER?
PUT US INTO HOVER OVER ANGEL'S CREST
...AND LOWER DOWN, GENTLY.

as the perfect replica descends to her flock, her disciples are first stunned into silence . . .


then fall to the ground, overcome.
EVERY GOOD MESSIAH DESERVES AT LEAST ONE SECOND COMING.
PORFIRIO, GET US OUT OF HERE.
WHERE TO?
SOMEWHERE TAWDRY AND CHEAP I FEEL LIKE WALLOWING
LET'S GO
THE END

She can be found in HEAVY METAL magazine

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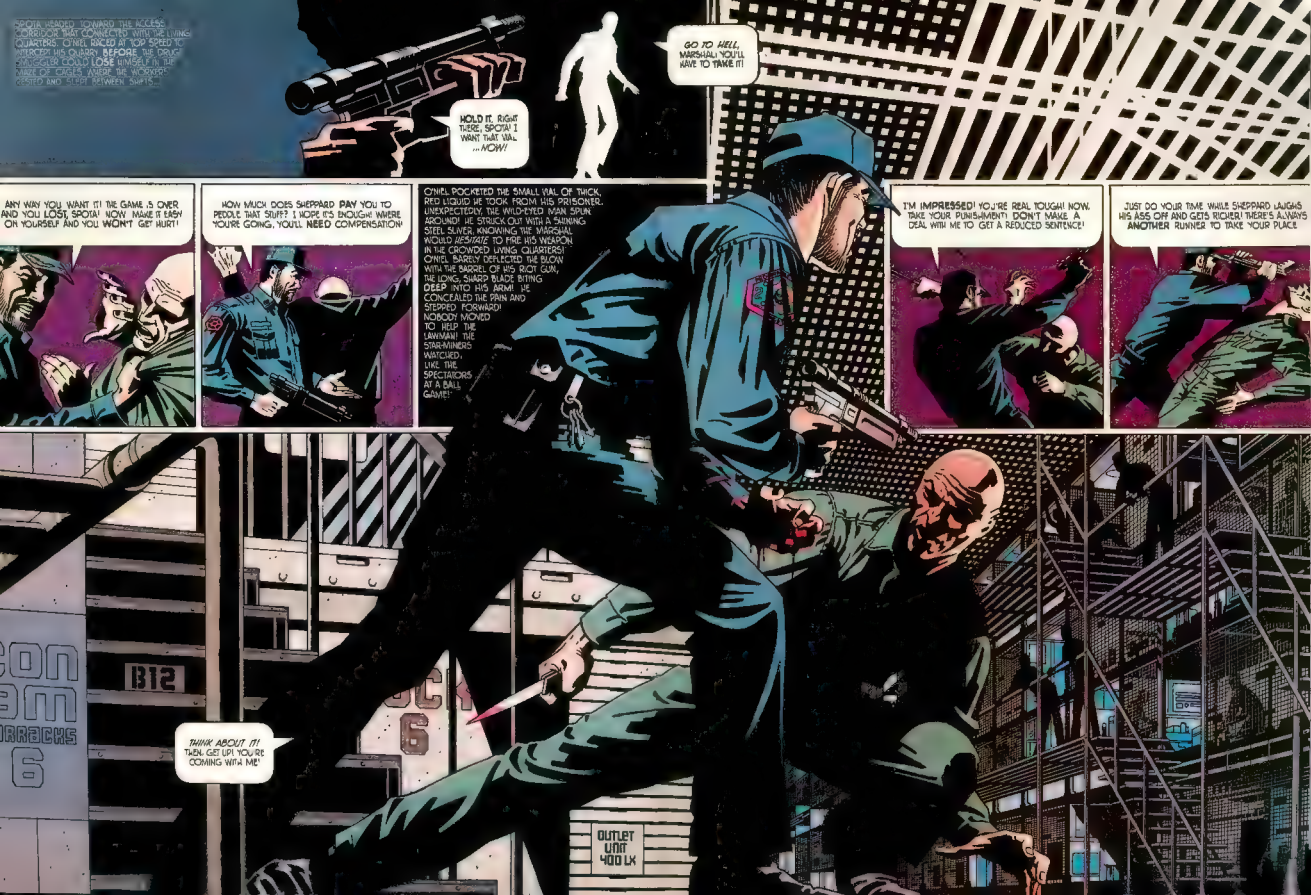
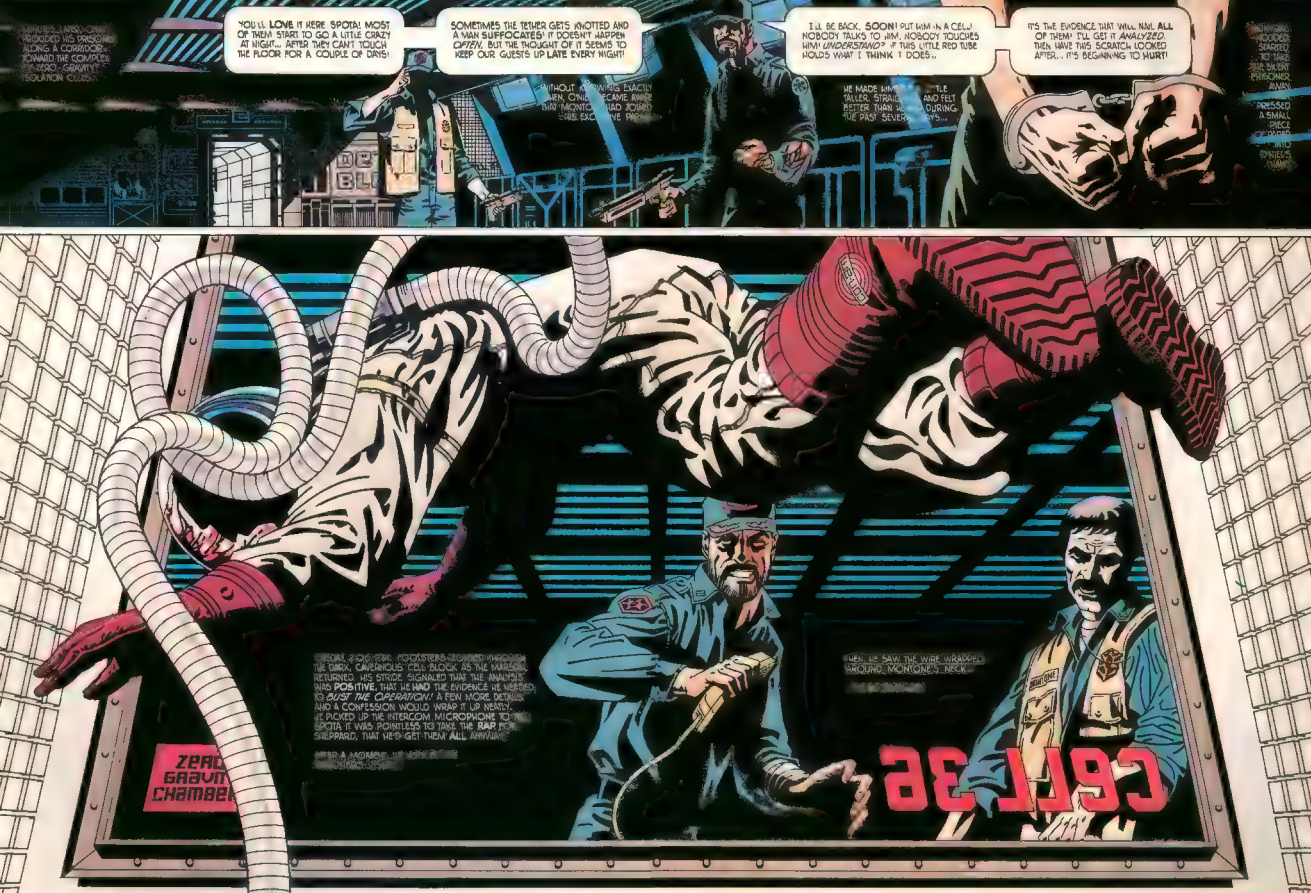
TUESDAY, 11:15 A.M. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, SINCE DISCOVERING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN MARK SHEPPARD, CON-AM 27'S GENERAL MANAGER, DEPUTY MONTONE, AND THE TWO EX-CONS SPOTA AND YARIO, MARSHAL O'NIEL HAS ALMOST CONSTANTLY MONITORED THEIR MOVEMENTS. WITH THE AID OF SECURITY SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS, HE WAITED IMPATIENTLY FOR THEM TO MAKE A MISTAKE IN THEIR ROUTINE, AN ERROR THAT WOULD TIE THEM DIRECTLY TO THE SERIES OF BIZARRE DEATHS PLAGUING IO. THE TIME PASSED SLOWLY, ERODING O'NIEL'S NERVES DEADENING HIS EMOTIONS AS HE WAITED FOR THE TRAP TO SNAP SHUT. THOUGH HIS WIFE HAD ABANDONED HIM, AND THE MINERS SHIED AWAY IN HIS PRESENCE, HIS ONLY THOUGHTS WERE TO MAKE THOSE RESPONSIBLE PAY FOR THEIR CRIMES... EVEN IF IT COST HIM HIS OWN LIFE!
EXL:TA67
DOOR 24
SHEPPARD... HE WAS AT THE TOP PULLING ALL THE STRINGS, SO THAT NOBODY CARED WHAT HAPPENED, AS LONG AS EVERYBODY GOT WHAT THEY WANTED. O'NIEL KNEW WHAT HE WANTED... TO TAKE SHEPPARD OUT! HE COULD DO IT THEIR WAY, BUT THE LAW HAD BECOME HIS WAY OF LIFE. HE NEEDED TO MAKE THE VITAL CONNECTION: A DIRECT LINK FROM YARIO TO SPOTA TO SHEPPARD! SOMEONE HAD TO PAY FOR IO'S MORTALITY RATE. O'NIEL PUT HIS LIFE ON THE LINE AGAINST THEIRS! DEATH WAITED IN THE DEEPENING SHADOWS OF OUTLAND...
SUDDENLY, THE HAIR ROSE ON THE BACK OF O'NIEL'S NECK! SPOTA AND YARIO WERE TOGETHER ON THE SHUTTLE LOADING DOCK. HE PUNCHED UP THE ZOOM LENS TO DISCOVER THE FREIGHT WORKER CAUTIOUSLY PASSING A SMALL OBJECT TO THE NERVOUS MAN WALKING BY THE MASSIVE FORKLIFT! THE BOLDNESS OF THE MOVE GAVE THE LAWMAN A MOMENTARY FEELING HE WAS BEING SET UP, DRAWN INTO THE DRUG RUNNERS' PLOT TO ELIMINATE ANYONE WHO OPPOSED THEM! A SPLIT SECOND LATER, THE FEELING WAS GONE. THE EVIDENCE HE SOUGHT WAS THERE. ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS TAKE IT! O'NIEL BURST INTO ACTION!
WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY STERANKO
OUTLAND


SPOTA HEADED TOWARD THE ACCESS CORRIDOR THAT CONNECTED WITH THE LIVING QUARTERS. O'NEIL RACED AT TOP SPEED TO INTERCEPT HIS QUARRY BEFORE THE DRUGS SMUGGLER COULD LOSE HIMSELF IN THE MAZE OF CAGES WHERE THE WORKERS CRAMPED AND SLEPT BETWEEN SHIFTS...
HOLD IT, RIGHT THERE, SPOTA! I WANT THAT VIAL... ...NOW!
GO TO HELL, MARSHAL! YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE IT!
ANY WAY YOU WANT IT! THE GAME IS OVER AND YOU LOST, SPOTA! NOW MAKE IT EASY ON YOURSELF AND YOU WON'T GET HURT!
HOW MUCH DOES SHEPPARD PAY YOU TO PEDDLE THAT STUFF? I HOPE IT'S ENOUGH! WHERE YOU'RE GOING, YOU'LL NEED COMPENSATION!
O'NEIL POCKETED THE SMALL VIAL OF THICK, RED LIQUID HE TOOK FROM HIS PRISONER. UNEXPECTEDLY, THE WILDEYED MAN SPUN AROUND. HE STRUCK OUT WITH A SLASHING STEEL SLIVER, KNOWING THE MARSHAL WOULD HESITATE TO FIRE HIS WEAPON IN THE CROWDED LIVING QUARTERS! O'NEIL BARELY DEFLECTED THE BLOW WITH THE BARREL OF HIS RIOT GUN, THE LONG, SHARP BLADE BITING DEEP INTO HIS ARM! HE CONCEALED THE PAIN AND STEPPED FORWARD! NOBODY MOVED TO HELP THE UNKNOWN! THE SPECTATORS WATCHED, LIKE THE SPECTATORS AT A BALL GAME!
I'M IMPRESSED! YOU'RE REAL TOUGH! NOW, TAKE YOUR PUNISHMENT! DON'T MAKE A DEAL WITH ME TO GET A REDUCED SENTENCE!
JUST DO YOUR TIME WHILE SHEPPARD LAUGHS HIS ASS OFF AND GETS RICHER! THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER RUNNER TO TAKE YOUR PLACE.
THINK ABOUT IT! THEN, GET UP! YOU'RE COMING WITH ME!
B12
6
OUTLET UNIT 400 LX


YOU'LL LOVE IT HERE, SPOTA! MOST OF THEM START TO GO A LITTLE CRAZY AT NIGHT... AFTER THEY CAN'T TOUCH THE FLOOR FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS!
SOMETIMES THE TETHER GETS KNOTTED AND A MAN SUFFOCATES! IT DOESN'T HAPPEN OFTEN, BUT THE THOUGHT OF IT SEEMS TO KEEP OUR GUESTS UP LATE EVERY NIGHT!
I'LL BE BACK, SOON! PUT HIM IN A CELL! NOBODY TALKS TO JIM, NOBODY TOUCHES HIM! UNDERSTAND? IF THIS LITTLE RED TUBE HOLDS WHAT I THINK IT DOES...
IT'S THE EVIDENCE THAT WILL NAIL ALL OF THEM! I'LL GET IT ANALYZED, THEN HAVE THIS SCRATCH LOOKED AFTER... IT'S BEGINNING TO HURT!
CELL 36
ZERO GRAVITY CHAMBER

IMAGE

© J. JONES 1981

HE MADE THIS STUFF ON THE WALLS.

WE LEAPT AT LIFE AND LIVING. WE WONDERED. AND NO ONE WAS ALONE THEN. WE HAD US.

WHERE IS HE?

SEE THIS.

HE DID THIS.

WHO IS HE?

WHAT DO YOU CALL HIM?

WHY SHOULD I CALL HIM?

HE'S DEAD...

SOME THOUGHT IT A TERRIBLE TIME. NIGHT CAME DAILY, BUT DAY NEVER CAME NIGHTLY.

THE EYE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH

BY BROCAL REMOHI

IN THE DISTANCE, THE SKY WAS AWESOME WITH RED AS THE FLAMES AND SMOKE ON THE PLAIN QUICKLY SPREAD.

ARCANE RODE ON HIS HORSE AMONG THE RUINS OF THE VILLAGE. DISASTER AND DEATH WERE EVERYWHERE.
WHO DID THIS, OLD MAN?
OH, SAVIOR... IT'S TOUGAR AND HIS WARRIORS. FOR SEVERAL MOONS NOW, THEY HAVE BEEN TEARING APART THE REGION. THEY HAVE PILLAGED AND BURNT OUR VILLAGE. THEY RAPED AND KILLED OUR WOMEN. OUR SONS AND NEPHEWS HAVE BEEN MASSACRED, TOO.
ONLY A FEW OLD MEN HAVE ESCAPED THE MASSACRE. THEY TOOK MOST ALL OF US. ONLY THE DEAD ARE LEFT. LEAVE US TO UNITE OUR ASHES WITH THEIRS.
RESPECTING THE WILL OF THE SURVIVORS TO PERISH IN THE FLAMES, WITH THEIR PEOPLE, ARCANE CONTINUED ON HIS PATH...

HE TRAVELED THROUGH THE SAVAGE LANDS UNDER THE BURNING RAYS OF THE SUN.
LONG, SILENT HOURS HAD PASSED WHEN SUDDENLY SAVAGE WAR CRIES RANG OUT...
A FEW MOMENTS LATER, A FEROCIOUS STRUGGLE BEGAN...
BROCA & WILLIAMS

THE STEEL OF THE SWORDS GLISTENED. ARCANE'S WAS COLORED WITH RED, AS THE NUMBER OF HIS ENEMIES DIMINISHED BEFORE HIM...

ABANDONING THE DEAD BODIES ON THE FROZEN EARTH, THE MEN BEGAN TO LEAVE.

AFTER A LONG HORSE RIDE THROUGH THE DESERTED MOUNTAINS, THEY CAME UPON A PLAIN SURROUNDED BY ROCKY PEAKS. TOUGAR'S ARMY CAMP WAS AT THE CENTER.

ARCANE WAS LED TO CHIEF TOUGAR. THE CHIEF WAS TOLD OF THE COMBAT WITH THE PRISONER.
..AND HIS SWORD IS COVERED WITH THE BLOOD OF YOUR FAITHFUL WARRIORS!
YOU WILL DIE AT SUNSET BECAUSE OF THIS!

BUT NOW I SHALL GRANT YOU, GREAT WARRIOR, THE PRIVILEGE OF SHARING MY MEAL...
AND IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY FESTIVAL IN HONOR OF THE CONDEMNED MAN, WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF FOOD AND WINES TOU-GAR DRINKS INSATIABLY, AND AS THE WINE TAKES ITS TOLL, HIS TONGUE LOOSENS...
THE SECRET OF THE FEROCITY OF MY MEN?. I WILL TELL YOU, SINCE YOU ARE GOING TO DIE!
I DISCOVERED THE EYE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH...THAT STONE HAS THE POWER TO INCITE HATE AND VIOLENCE IN ANYONE WHO GAZES UP-ON IT!
. THE PRIESTESSES OF THE TEMPLE OF ISLIAH USED THIS POWER, ACCORDINGLY, IN ORDER TO INSTILL A HATRED IN THEIR PEOPLE. THEY DOMINATED THEIR TERRITORIES, BUT NOW I'VE DISCOVERED THEIR SECRET. I POSSESS THE EYE OF ISLIAH! YET THEY DON'T KNOW IT!
THERE IS A PEASANT IN FARAWAY ISLIAH, A KIND OF VISIONARY, WHO WANTS TO DO AWAY WITH THE TYRANNY OF THE PRIESTESSES
AND THEY NEED THE STONE IN ORDER TO EXCITE THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE REBEL, OR THEIR REIGN WILL COME TO AN END.
...BUT THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT...AT THE OP-PORTUNE MOMENT, WE SHALL OVERTHROW OUR KING. HE IS TOO PASSIVE A MAN...
WHEN I HAVE THE POWER, WE WILL SPREAD OUR CONQUESTS AS WIDE AS THE LANDS OF ISLIAH... HA! HA! HA!

ARCANE'S SKEPTICISM MADE TOUGAR FURIOUS IN A DRUNKEN FIT, HE ORDERED ONE OF HIS MEN TO BRING A SMALL CHEST TO HIS TENT..
YOU WILL BELIEVE ME WHEN YOU SEE.
THE EYE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH! THE PRECIOUS STONE, SET IN A CONCAVE STRUCTURE, WAS MOUNTED BETWEEN TWO CLAMPS OF GOLD. THE EVIL SHONE IN TOUGAR'S HANDS.
EXPOSED TO THIS ANGER-INDUCING OBJECT, TOUGAR BEGAN TO UTTER ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ONE OF HIS WARRIORS!
THE MAGNIFICENT STONE SENT OUT VIOLET FLASHES, WHEREUPON THE WARRIORS TURNED TOWARD THE ACCUSED MAN WITH GROWING HATRED
THEY BECOME NO MORE THAN A BAND OF BLOODTHIRSTY BEASTS
AAAAAAAH!
THE EYE ACTS AS A BELL. IT REFLECTS, AMPLIFIES, AND INCITES HATRED. THEY DON'T HEAR MY WORDS, THEY FEEL THEM, AS IF THIS ANGER HAD BEEN BORN IN THEM. HA! HA! HA!
OOH, GODS!
BROOKS REMBRANDT

ARCANE ATTACKED THE CHIEF WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION!
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION, HE SEIZED A PIECE OF BURNING WOOD AND..
.. PENETRATED THROUGH TO THE STALL WHERE THE HORSES WERE KEPT. HE JUMPED ONTO HIS STALLION, WHILE THE FREED HORSES...
CHARGED FORTH IN A MAD CAVALCADE. THE WARRIOR ESCAPED AT A FULL GALLOP INTO THE TWILIGHT.

ARCANE WAS ALREADY WAY AHEAD OF THE BANDITS BY THE TIME THEY HAD GATHERED THEIR HORSES.
FLY, MY HORSE! FLY!
ARCANE WAS ALMOST OUT OF REACH, THANKS TO THE SWIFTNESS OF HIS OWN STEED.
BY THE TIME NIGHT FELL, ARCANE HAD SUCCEEDED IN SHAKING OFF HIS FOLLOWERS.
MY SWORD! I MUST HAVE LEFT IT IN TOUGAR'S HANDS!
LATER THAT EVENING, A HORSE'S FOOTSTEPS SOUNDED ON THE STONE PATH...
THIS MUST BE ONE OF THE BANDITS I'LL TAKE HIS WEAPONS AWAY FROM HIM!

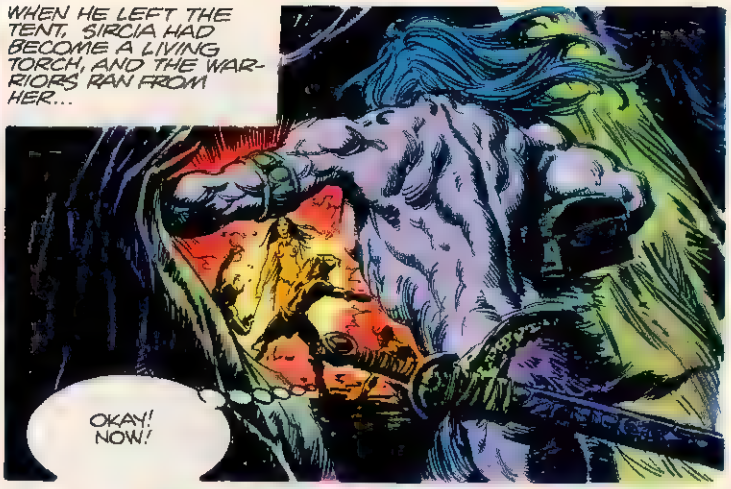
HUH?
GODS! A WOMAN!
LET ME GO, YOU VILLAIN!
I AM NOT A VILLAIN... I THOUGHT YOU WERE A HENCHMAN OF TOUGAR'S WHO ARE YOU?
I AM SIRCIA, A PRIESTESS FROM THE TEMPLE OF THE GODDESS ISLIAH...
DID YOU COME FROM FAR AWAY?
MY MISSION IS TO FIND THE EYE OF THE GODDESS, WHICH WAS STOLEN FROM US. IN ORDER TO PRESERVE PEACE, MY PEOPLE NEED THIS MAGIC EYE, WHICH HAS THE POWER TO...
DON'T LIE! I KNOW OF ITS TERRIBLE POWER! THE POLITICS OF YOUR COUNTRY AND ITS USE OF THE MAGIC EYE ARE OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE TO ME... BUT I WANT TO AVENGE MYSELF ON TOUGAR, AND HE HAS IT IN HIS POSSESSION! IF YOU HELP ME, I'LL TAKE THE STONE AND GIVE IT TO YOU...
GOOD, WARRIOR! I SEE THAT WE WILL GET ALONG. LET'S GET ON OUR WAY. PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR PLAN IN DETAIL TO ME!

THE HOURS FLEW BY AND THE NIGHT GREW VERY BLACK..
THE CAMP SEEMS CALM LET'S LEAVE THE HORSES YOU KNOW THE PLAN, SIRCIA...
ARCANE LEFT SIRCIA AND WENT OFF TO PROWL AROUND THE ENCAMPMENT
HA! DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?
WHERE DID SHE COME FROM ?
THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT SHE'S A GIFT FROM THE GODS!
SUDDENLY
WHA WHAT IS IT?
SHE SHE IS AFLAME!
ALL AT ONCE, THE CAMP WAS PANICKED!
AAAAAAAH!
NO GREAT GODS! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!

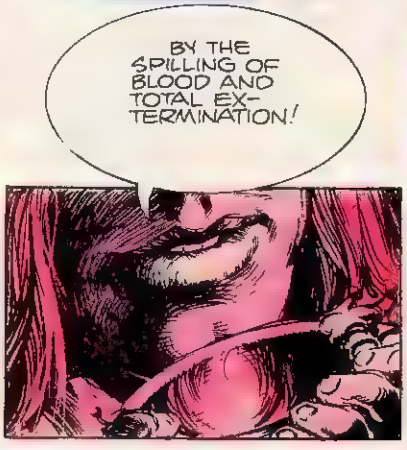
ARCANE PROFITED FROM TOUGAR'S EXIT..

TO GRAB HIS SWORD AND THE CHEST.

WHEN HE LEFT THE TENT, SIRCIA HAD BECOME A LIVING TORCH, AND THE WARRIORS RAN FROM HER...

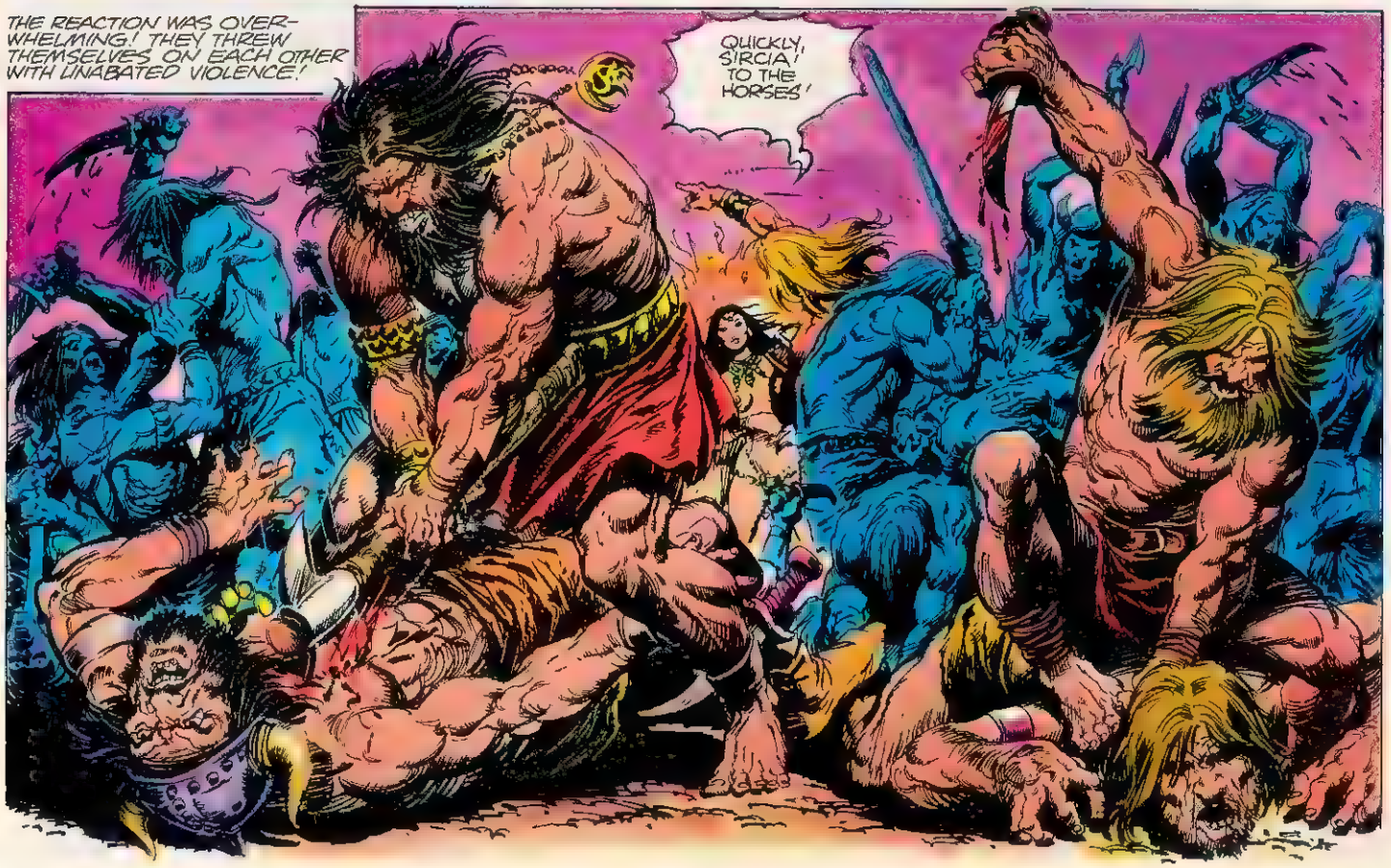


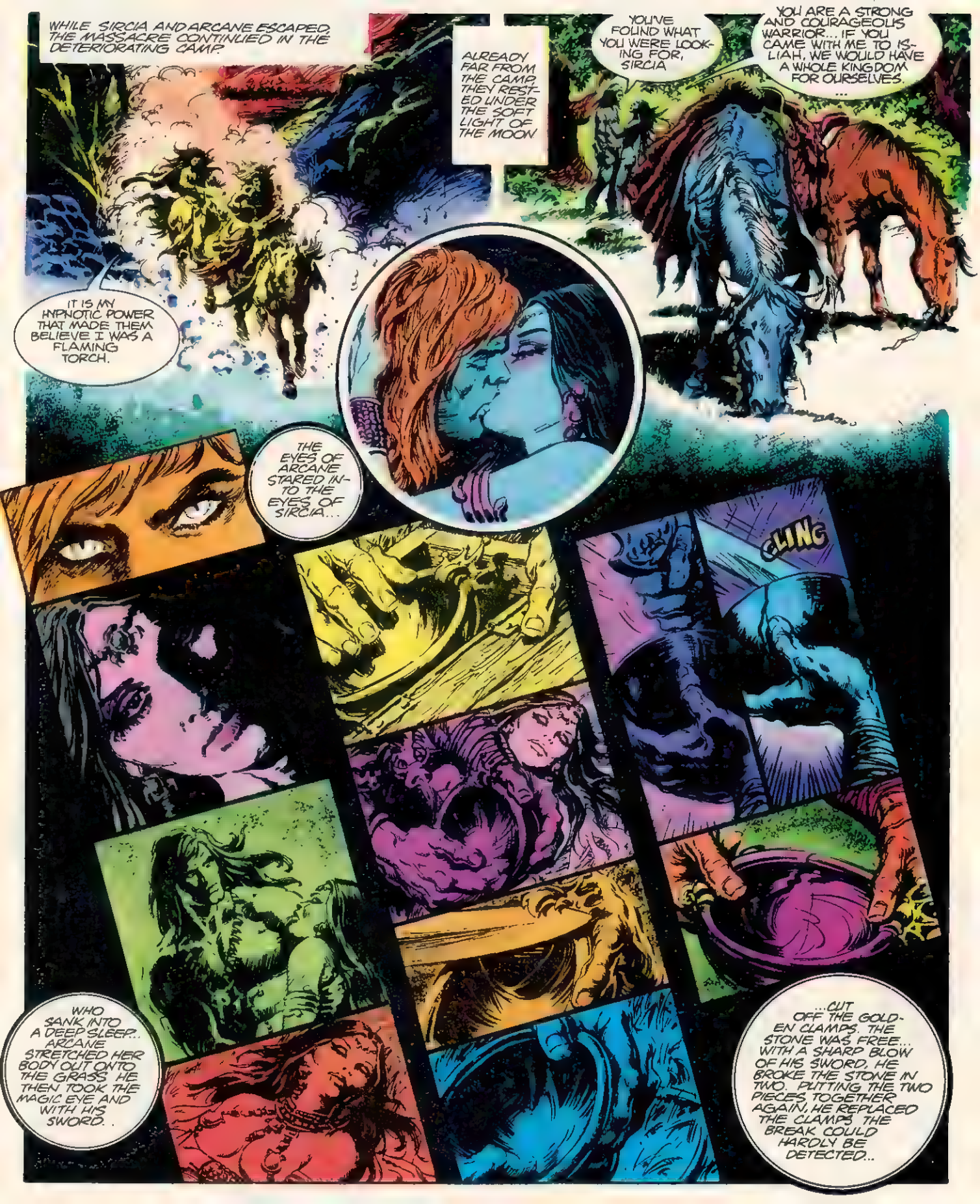
ARCANE TOOK THE MAGIC EYE IN HIS HANDS AND MURMURED..

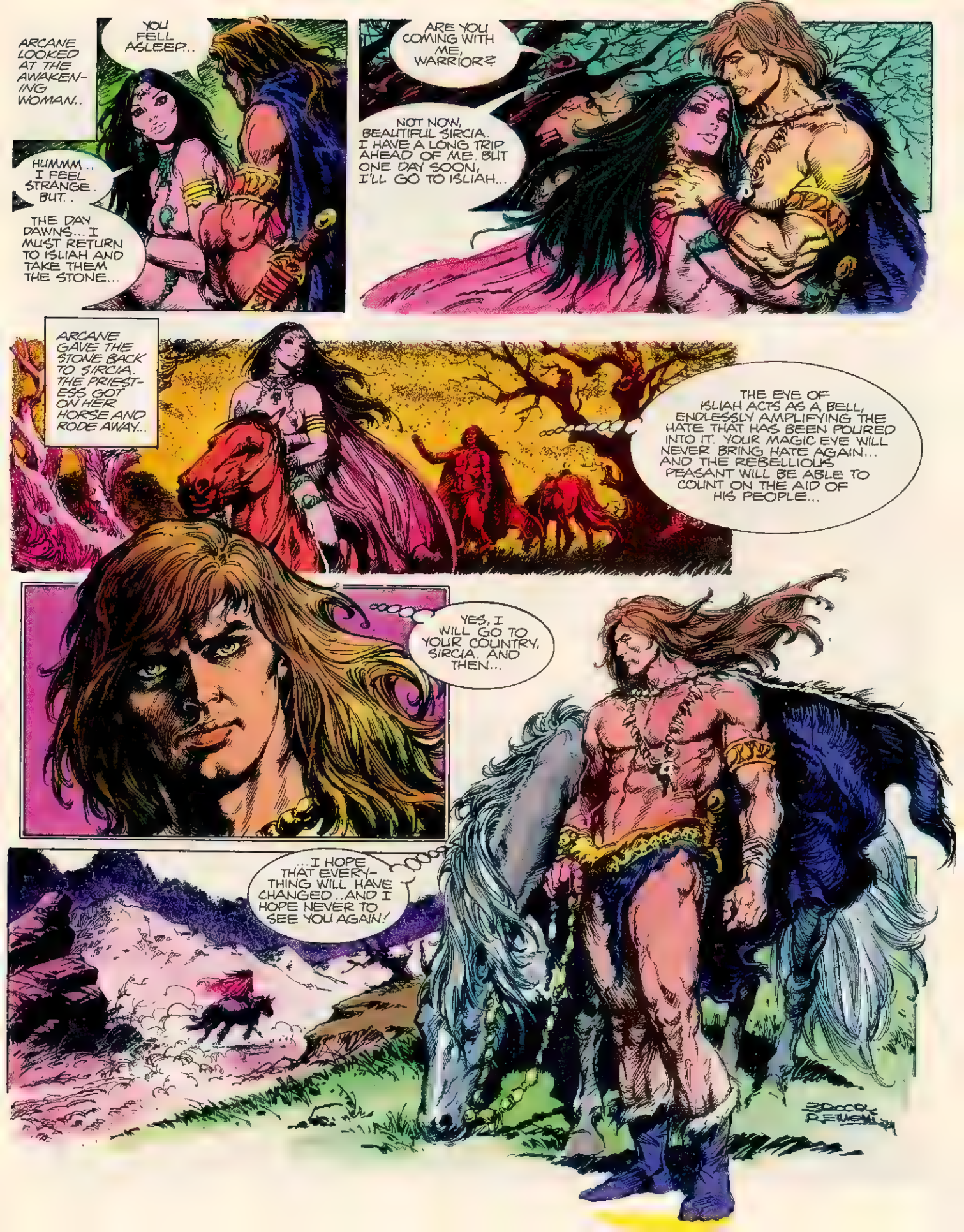


WHILE THE MAGIC EYE EMITTED ITS VIOLET RAYS WAVES OF BLOOD, DRENCHED WITH HATRED, WENT THROUGH THE BRAINS OF TOUGAR AND HIS WARRIORS.

THE REACTION WAS OVERWHELMING! THEY THREW THEMSELVES ON EACH OTHER WITH UNABATED VIOLENCE!




WHILE SIRCIA AND ARCANE ESCAPED, THE MASSACRE CONTINUED IN THE DETERIORATING CAMP.
ALREADY FAR FROM THE CAMP, THEY RESTED UNDER THE SOFT LIGHT OF THE MOON
YOU'VE FOUND WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR, SIRCIA
YOU ARE A STRONG AND COURAGEOUS WARRIOR... IF YOU CAME WITH ME TO ISLIAH, WE WOULD HAVE A WHOLE KINGDOM FOR OURSELVES.
...
IT IS MY HYPNOTIC POWER THAT MADE THEM BELIEVE I WAS A FLAMING TORCH.
THE EYES OF ARCANE STARED INTO THE EYES OF SIRCIA...
CLING
WHO SANK INTO A DEEP SLEEP... ARCANE STRETCHED HER BODY OUT ONTO THE GRASS. HE THEN TOOK THE MAGIC EYE AND WITH HIS SWORD...
...CUT OFF THE GOLDEN CLAMPS. THE STONE WAS FREE... WITH A SHARP BLOW OF HIS SWORD, HE BROKE THE STONE IN TWO. PUTTING THE TWO PIECES TOGETHER AGAIN, HE REPLACED THE CLAMPS. THE BREAK COULD HARDLY BE DETECTED...


ARCANE LOOKED AT THE AWAKENING WOMAN..
YOU FELL ASLEEP..
HUMMM.. I FEEL STRANGE. BUT..
THE DAY DAWNS... I MUST RETURN TO ISLIAH AND TAKE THEM THE STONE...
ARE YOU COMING WITH ME, WARRIOR?
NOT NOW, BEAUTIFUL SIRCIA. I HAVE A LONG TRIP AHEAD OF ME. BUT ONE DAY SOON, I'LL GO TO ISLIAH...
ARCANE GAVE THE STONE BACK TO SIRCIA. THE PRIESTESS GOT ON HER HORSE AND RODE AWAY...
THE EYE OF ISLIAH ACTS AS A BELL, ENDLESSLY AMPLIFYING THE HATE THAT HAS BEEN POURED INTO IT. YOUR MAGIC EYE WILL NEVER BRING HATE AGAIN... AND THE REBELLIOUS PEASANT WILL BE ABLE TO COUNT ON THE AID OF HIS PEOPLE...
YES, I WILL GO TO YOUR COUNTRY, SIRCIA. AND THEN...
...I HOPE THAT EVERYTHING WILL HAVE CHANGED..AND I HOPE NEVER TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

THE CURSE OF THE HOBBIT

by Charles Platt

Reading escapist adventure fiction is a way of taking a mental vacation once in a while, and there's nothing wrong with that. We can all enjoy journeying to fantastic lands of heroic deeds.

But the last fifteen years have seen the rise of a new form that debases escapist adventure fiction to a lower level than ever before. It reduces characterization to a puerile simplicity, is written and plotted with little skill or finesse, and cuts off all redeeming realistic references to real life, real people, real problems, or real emotions.

This new area of fiction is fantasy. Fifteen years ago, it did not exist as a separate commercial category. Today it is the fastest-growing genre in novels and movies, capturing the meager imagination of everyone from Hollywood producers to Harvard professors who ought to know better. The size of its audience, the totality of the escape it provides, and the sheer dumbness of that escape indicate a castastrophic decline of public taste and a cowardly reluctance of audiences to cope with the real world.

Before going further, let me define my terms. When I speak of fantasy, I'm not referring to its older, honorable forms. I do not include the somber tales of horror that Poe once wrote and that Stephen King produces today. Nor do I mean thoughtful explorations of strange events in the everyday world, such as were once written by H. G. Wells (when he wasn't writing science fiction) and are still written by Fritz Leiber. I'm talking about the newer breed of fantasy, with its new breed of ridiculous characters:

- the sword-wielding, lantern-jawed thug, nostrils flaring with witless blood lust as he slices up slavering demons of darkness;
- the alabaster-fleshed, leather-clad teen queen cowering from a leering lizard-thing that crawls from its lair to rake her bulging tits with its slime-stained talons;
- and winsome dragons, lovable gnomes, lost princesses, wise old wizards, communities of rabbits, philosophical chickens....

I lump them all together, because this stuff all has the same basic appeal: total negation of everyday life, by means of creating a world that does not touch our own at any point. I'll call it otherworld fantasy, identifiable by the following characteristics:

1. The landscape is primitive (no concrete, no steel, no billboards, not even a brick wall marring the scenery).

2. No technology is allowed (no modern transport, electricity, flushing toilets...and no weapon more advanced than a flintlock pistol).

3. The characters are simplified (their motives, deeds, and problems don't remotely resemble those of anyone you've ever met—no hesitations, self-doubt, or frailty, and few blemishes. Some adventure fantasy takes characterization to its nadir, as far from reality as it can go, by focusing on animals, or even mythical creatures, instead of on people.)

4. The setting is far future or far past or another universe altogether (to avoid questions about "plausibility"—whether the events could really take place).

5. Often (not always) the writer adopts a quaint, archaic, and mannered style (people say "thee" and "thou"; bad guys get "smitten" rather than punched out).

6. Usually (not always) in otherworld-fantasy novels, there's a map at the front and a vocabulary of invented words at the back (again, to reinforce the notion of the imaginary world and erase the everyday world).

Fifteen years ago, adult fiction with these characteristics was seldom seen. At that time, otherworld fantasy was still an obscure

backwater of literature appealing to a tiny audience of fanatics. Frank Frazetta was having trouble selling his artwork, Richard Adams was still collecting rejection slips, and the only people who knew of Conan the Barbarian were misfits treasuring out-of-print hardcover editions.

The book that helped to change all that was *Lord of the Rings*. This self-satisfied saga of adorably cute little creatures, narrated with ponderous jocularity as if from the depths of a British uncle's fireside armchair, vaguely resembled *The Wind in the Willows*. But whereas that book had always been recognized as children's literature, Tolkien's trilogy became popular among persons of all ages. Perhaps this was partly because of his academic credentials, which gave him spurious authority as a Serious Novelist. But perhaps it was also because the reading tastes of many adults were becoming more childlike—in the sense that readers seemed increasingly ready to accept far-fetched (or far-out, as we used to say) myths and fairy tales.

Remember the social context. In the late sixties the emerging "youth culture" was starting to swallow all kinds of half-baked apocrypha that would have been laughed at a couple of years earlier: Eastern gurus instead of Western religions, student revolutionaries as opposed to party politicians, astrology in place of astrophysics, macrobiotics rather than Big Macs, and—most of all—taking drugs as a revelatory experience.

Acid was the most important factor. Those who tried it—and even those who merely read about its effects—began to accept the idea that hallucinations could be just as valid as normal perceptions of everyday life. And the "higher reality" of acid wasn't so far from Middle Earth—witness the number of black-light posters that ripped off Tolkienesque imagery.

Along with all this came a decline in critical values. The kind of person who complained that a story didn't make logical sense, or was shallow and badly written, was considered a drag to have around. *Could you get off on the stuff?* That was the real test—of dope, light shows, music, and fiction too. Fantasy was used to modify your head, as a visceral input, not as literature.

However, as I've already said, there wasn't much fantasy around to begin with. So science fiction was used as well, even though, for mind-bending purposes, it could be like bad acid—too often, it brought you down with its references to complexities and problems of the real world. *Stranger in a Strange Land* was good—a blissed-out messiah forming a free-love commune and disincorporating his enemies in the Establishment. Naturally it became a best-seller. But other Heinlein novels didn't work so well: *Farnham's Freehold*, for instance, was all about World War III and how to survive it. Little wonder that the book never sold well, nor did science fiction that sustained faith in the power of rationality and science to save us rather than end us. Rationality and science were part of the system that counterculture people were reacting against.

For a long time, science-fiction writers didn't seem to realize what was happening among their readership, and neither did New York editors. Science fiction had always been cheap and sleazy; nobody made much money writing or publishing it, and your friends laughed at you if you were seen reading it. Back in the fifties, the only reason for persisting, as an adult, in reading science fiction was that you shared "The Dream." The Dream was that science would mold a utopian future and bring all kinds of amazing and wonderful riches to mankind. While other people scoffed at nutty ideas like those of men going to the moon or telephone calls being relayed by satellites, as a science-fiction reader you somehow fought off the ridicule and clung to The Dream and knew that one day the stories would come true. You read them not as fantasies but as keys to reality.

Well, the dope-brained hippie readers of the late sixties didn't know or care about The Dream. They picked up on images, got off on spacey ideas, and had no interest in logical plausibility, scientific accuracy, and all that other boring stuff.

Gradually, some sense of these new readers' needs started to filter through. It became clear that a book that built a complete, detailed, self-contained world of its own had a good chance of becoming cult material. *Dune*, though marketed as a science-fiction novel, had fantasy appeal because it was set so far from here and now that virtually nothing from everyday reality could contaminate its scenario. Sandworms, tribal rituals, desert battles—yes, you could get off on that, all right, and moreover the independent freethinkers won out at the end. Right on, as we used to say.

Philip José Farmer was another science-fiction author who scored a success with his most fantasy-oriented work. *To Your Scattered Bodies Go* was a book that created its own, totally separate universe, in which strange and wonderful things could happen and you could forget all about the seven o'clock news. The book involved reincarnation, too—another vogue-ish mystic fancy.

The demand for this kind of material naturally influenced the books that editors wanted to buy, and that in turn influenced the writers producing those books. If you've spent twenty years of your life writing conscientious, solid science fiction for $1,000 or $2,000 per book, and you see Robert Heinlein making that much in royalties every week from books he wrote a decade ago, you think twice about what you're doing and try to figure the trend. Likewise, if you're a conscientious editor who has quietly published conventional science-fiction for several years, and your boss asks you how come your books don't sell as well as *Dune*, you start trying to encourage your writers to produce that kind of stuff.

Not surprising, then, that the seventies saw a gradual shift away from high tech, away from near-future doom scenarios, toward far-far-distant alien worlds where anything could happen, and toward pure fantasy set in other universes altogether, where magic worked and you could do whatever you liked.

Now we're in the eighties, and otherworld fantasy has displaced science fiction in many publishers' catalogues and balance sheets. It's still segregated with science fiction, and usually edited by the same people, but its methods and appeal are quite different. Good science fiction tries to see into the future and tell us how things may actually be one day (*Timescape*, by Gregory Benford, or *Jem*, by Frederik Pohl, are excellent examples). By contrast, otherworld fantasy avoids even mentioning the future, still less the present. It takes us back to medieval times, to swordplay and vaguely Arthurian quests. (See Stephen Donaldson's tedious *Lord Foul's Bane* and the inevitable sequels.) Or it takes us to lands of muscle-bound barbarian bullies. (See Conan and his imitators; or the endless John Norman fantasies, set in a separate world where it's okay for men to tie up women and rape them.) Or it takes us to vaguely defined planets where you can fly your own dragon. (See Ann McCaffrey's stomach-turningly romantic, depressingly successful novels.)

All these examples contain the identifying characteristics that I listed earlier. All of them would have been considered suitable only for children, fifteen or twenty years ago. All of them are now enjoyed by adults who seem to want to believe in fairy tales, and who want not just escapist adventure but to be totally cut off from anything remotely real or remotely disturbing. No evidence of technology (we're too frightened of it). No subtlety of emotion (it's too confusing). No ambivalent characters (pure good and pure evil are a much more reassuring scheme). No everyday aspects of scenery or speech (that would spoil the illusion). Above all, no hint of a real-world dilemma or difficulty.

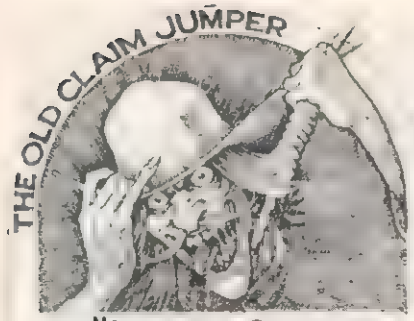
I suppose it's symptomatic of the times. Once, the American tendency was to feel omnipotent. All problems, surely, would yield to U.S. wealth, technology, and/or military power.

Now we're living in the eighties, and we look back and see that things weren't so simple. In fact, not one major social or economic problem has been successfully solved in the last ten years. At home and overseas, things seem to be getting worse: from nuclear proliferation to famine, unemployment, and inflation.

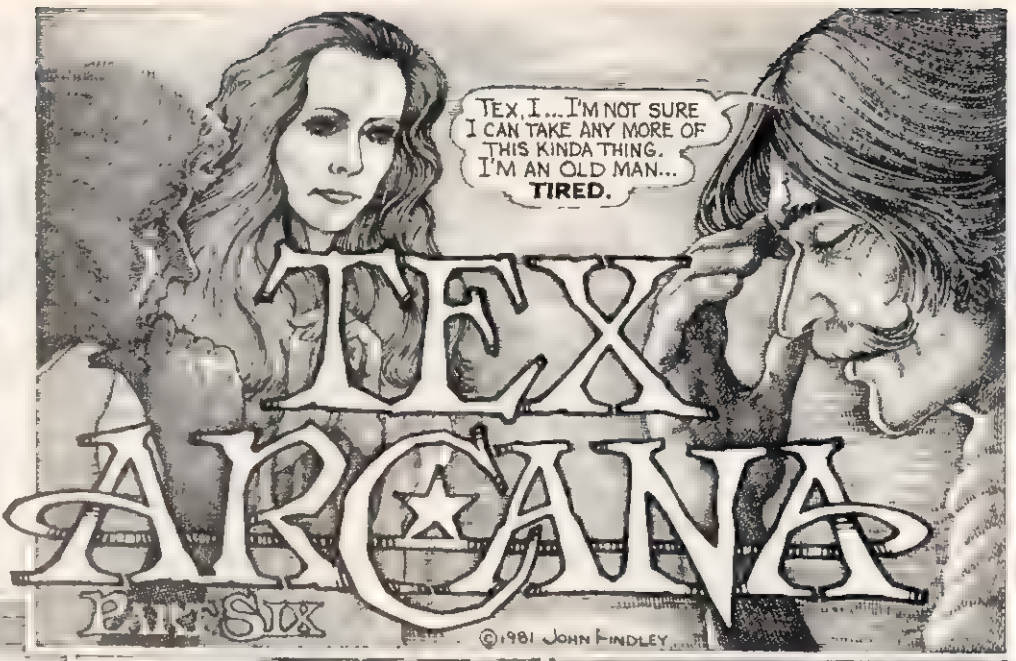
A rational reaction to these difficult times would be to try a little harder and apply ourselves a little more. After all, no nation solves its problems by ignoring them.

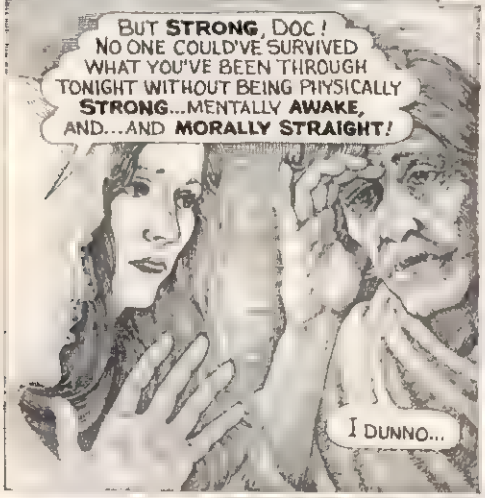
But that isn't the mood of the day. The mood is one of pessimism and cowardice. And so people turn from difficulties of the real world to reassuring simplicities of other worlds, totally insulated from our own. Readers and moviegoers journey into lands of fantasy where all is simple, all is certain, and all you need to vanquish your adversaries is a magic amulet and a sword.

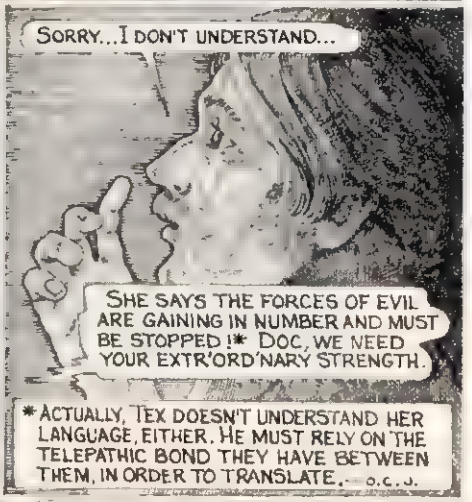
Charles Platt is the author of Dream Makers, *a collection of sf-writer profiles, and the editor of the* Patchin Review. *He is also the former editor for* New Worlds—*the late vanguard journal of literary science fiction.*

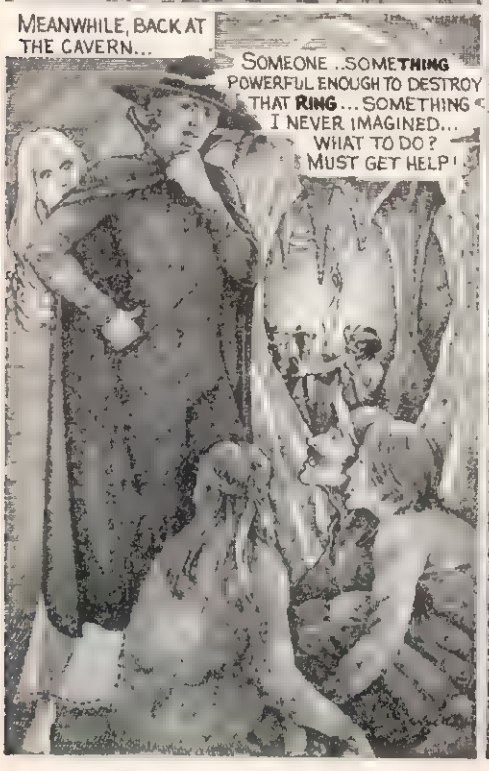


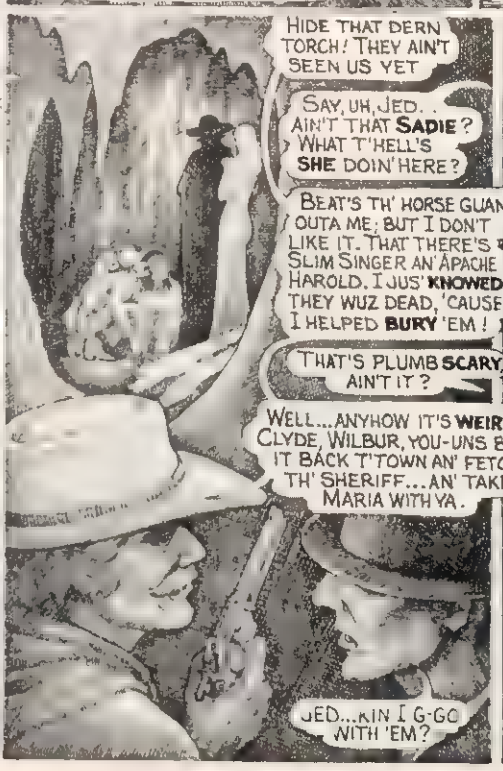
HOWDY, FOLKS! READY TO RIDE DOWN THAT **WESTERN TRAIL** AGAIN? WELL, NOW WE HAVE FOLKS STRUNG OUT ALL OVER THE TERRITORY. JED AND HIS SEARCH PARTY ARE OUT AT THE CAVERN, WHERE THEY MANAGED TO FIND MOST OF MARIA CONQUESO. THE SHERIFF AND ASSORTED TOWNSPEOPLE ARE BACK AT THE **NOOSE AND GIBBET** SALOON, WONDERING WHAT'S GOING ON AND JUST WHAT THE **HELL** HAS BECOME OF SADIE. AND OLD DOC MASON... WELL, DOC IS MILES AWAY TO THE **WEST**, IN THE COMPANY OF...




BUT **STRONG**, DOC! NO ONE COULD'VE SURVIVED WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH TONIGHT WITHOUT BEING PHYSICALLY **STRONG**...MENTALLY **AWAKE**, AND...AND **MORALLY STRAIGHT!**
I DUNNO...

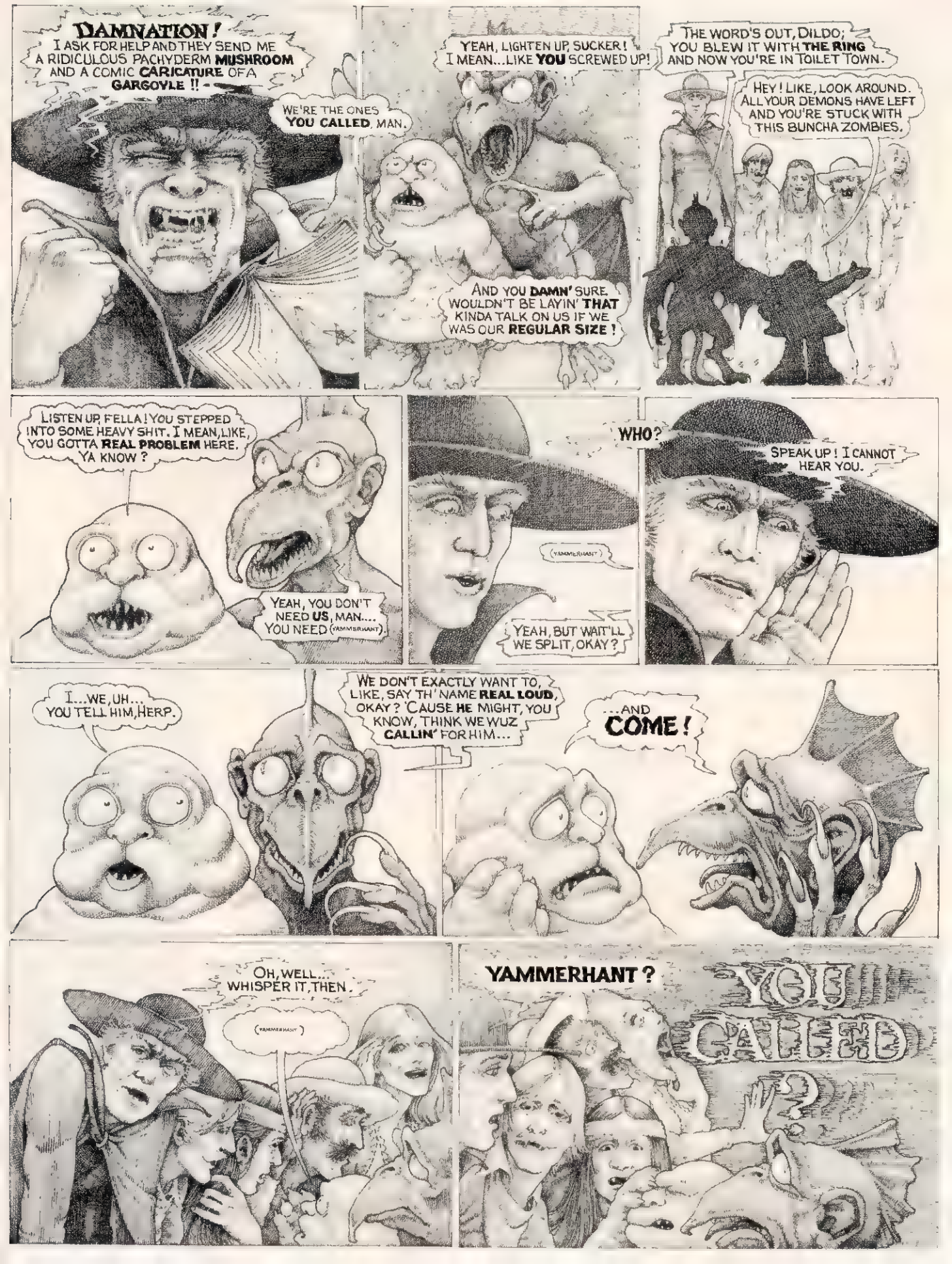

SORRY... I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
SHE SAYS THE FORCES OF EVIL ARE GAINING IN NUMBER AND MUST BE STOPPED!* DOC, WE NEED YOUR EXTR'ORD'NARY STRENGTH.
*ACTUALLY, TEX DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HER LANGUAGE, EITHER. HE MUST RELY ON THE TELEPATHIC BOND THEY HAVE BETWEEN THEM, IN ORDER TO TRANSLATE. — O.C.J.


MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE CAVERN...
SOMEONE ..SOME**THING** POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY THAT **RING**... SOMETHING I NEVER IMAGINED... WHAT TO DO? MUST GET HELP!

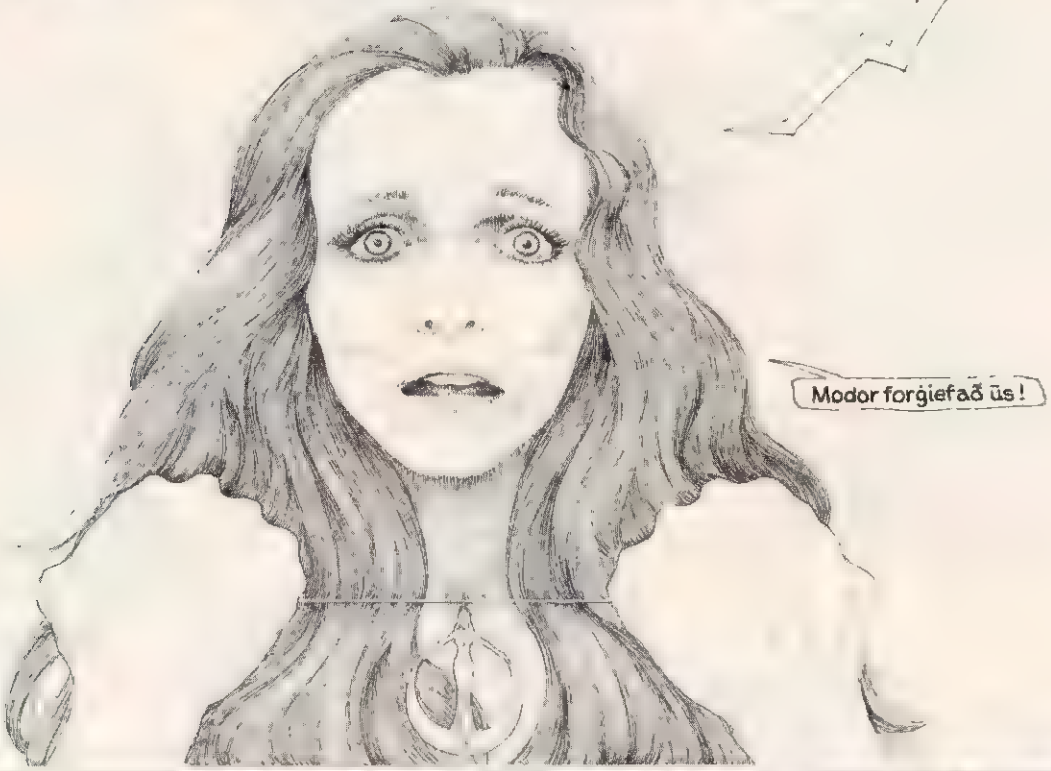

HIDE THAT DERN TORCH! THEY AIN'T SEEN US YET
SAY, UH, JED.. AIN'T THAT **SADIE**? WHAT T'HELL'S **SHE** DOIN' HERE?
BEAT'S TH' HORSE GUANO OUTA ME; BUT I DON'T LIKE IT. THAT THERE'S SLIM SINGER AN' APACHE HAROLD. I JUS' **KNOWED** THEY WUZ DEAD, 'CAUSE I HELPED **BURY** 'EM!
THAT'S PLUMB **SCARY**, AIN'T IT?
WELL... ANYHOW IT'S **WEIRD**. CLYDE, WILBUR, YOU-UNS BEAT IT BACK T'TOWN AN' FETCH TH' SHERIFF... AN' TAKE MARIA WITH YA.
JED... KIN I G-GO WITH 'EM?

OH, ALL RIGHT, TED CLYDE, YOU 'N' WILBUR AN' TH' KID STAY HERE WITH ME. TED, YOU 'N' CLEM KIN TAKE MARIA T'TOWN AN' BRING BACK TH' SHERIFF. AND A POSSE.
WILBUR 'N' THE KID AIN'T HERE. THEY SKEE-DADDLED RIGHT AFTER WE FOUND MARIA
DAD-BURN! WELL, THEN... CLEM AN' ME'LL STAY HERE. TED, YOU 'N' CLYDE GO GIT TH' SHERIFF. AN' **TAKE MARIA.**
AH, JED... DO WE HAFTA? SHE'S ACTIN' KINDA STRANGE.
GIT!

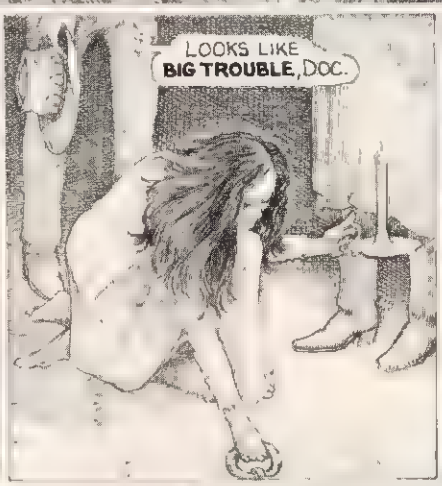
UH, BY TH' WAY, JED... ONE MORE THING....
WELL?!
CLEM AIN'T BEEN WITH US SINCE WE COME IN T'TH' CAVE.
HE ST-STAYED BEHIND T'HOLD (OW! QUIT!) TH' HORSES.
GIT! GO ON! I DON'T NEED ANY O' YOU-UNS. (YELLA-BELLIED BUNCHA DOG WARTS) JUS' HURRY BACK WITH TH' SHERIFF...
MASTER! I HEAR SOMETHEENGS, OVER DERE!
QUIET, FOOL! I AM CONCENTRATING. THIS MUST BE PERFECT!
WATCH YOUR FOOT!
COME, O SWEAZEY! COME, HERPMINADELPHIUS! HELP ME IN THIS, THE HOUR OF MY ABJECTEST NEED...
ANFROMACTITOR BREDGINE HERJCLOMPTIC DROMP ER...UM, SMATTERY!!
POOF
YAAH-ROWR! YORG!
OOPS.
SWEAZ! WHAT TH' HELL'S THIS... LAND O' THE GIANTS?
NAH! HE JUS' DREW THE PENTAGRAM TOO SMALL..

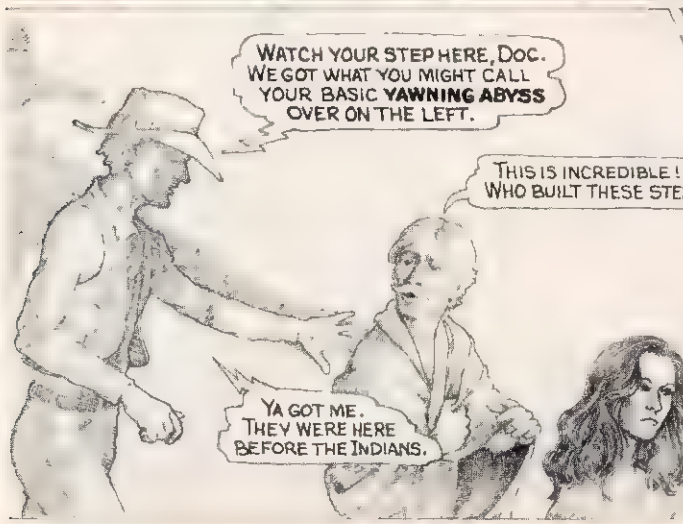

DAMNATION!
I ASK FOR HELP AND THEY SEND ME A RIDICULOUS PACHYDERM MUSHROOM AND A COMIC CARICATURE OF A GARGOYLE !!
WE'RE THE ONES YOU CALLED, MAN.
YEAH, LIGHTEN UP, SUCKER! I MEAN...LIKE YOU SCREWED UP!
AND YOU DAMN' SURE WOULDN'T BE LAYIN' THAT KINDA TALK ON US IF WE WAS OUR REGULAR SIZE!
THE WORD'S OUT, DILDO; YOU BLEW IT WITH THE RING AND NOW YOU'RE IN TOILET TOWN.
HEY! LIKE, LOOK AROUND. ALL YOUR DEMONS HAVE LEFT AND YOU'RE STUCK WITH THIS BUNCHA ZOMBIES.
LISTEN UP, FELLA! YOU STEPPED INTO SOME HEAVY SHIT. I MEAN, LIKE, YOU GOTTA REAL PROBLEM HERE. YA KNOW?
YEAH, YOU DON'T NEED US, MAN.... YOU NEED (YAMMERHANT).
(YAMMERHANT)
YEAH, BUT WAIT'LL WE SPLIT, OKAY?
WHO?
SPEAK UP! I CANNOT HEAR YOU.
I...WE, UH... YOU TELL HIM, HERP.
WE DON'T EXACTLY WANT TO, LIKE, SAY TH' NAME REAL LOUD, OKAY? 'CAUSE HE MIGHT, YOU KNOW, THINK WE WUZ CALLIN' FOR HIM...
...AND COME!
OH, WELL... WHISPER IT, THEN.
(YAMMERHANT)
YAMMERHANT?
YOU CALLED?

GÆMERHÆNT!


Modor forgiefað ūs!

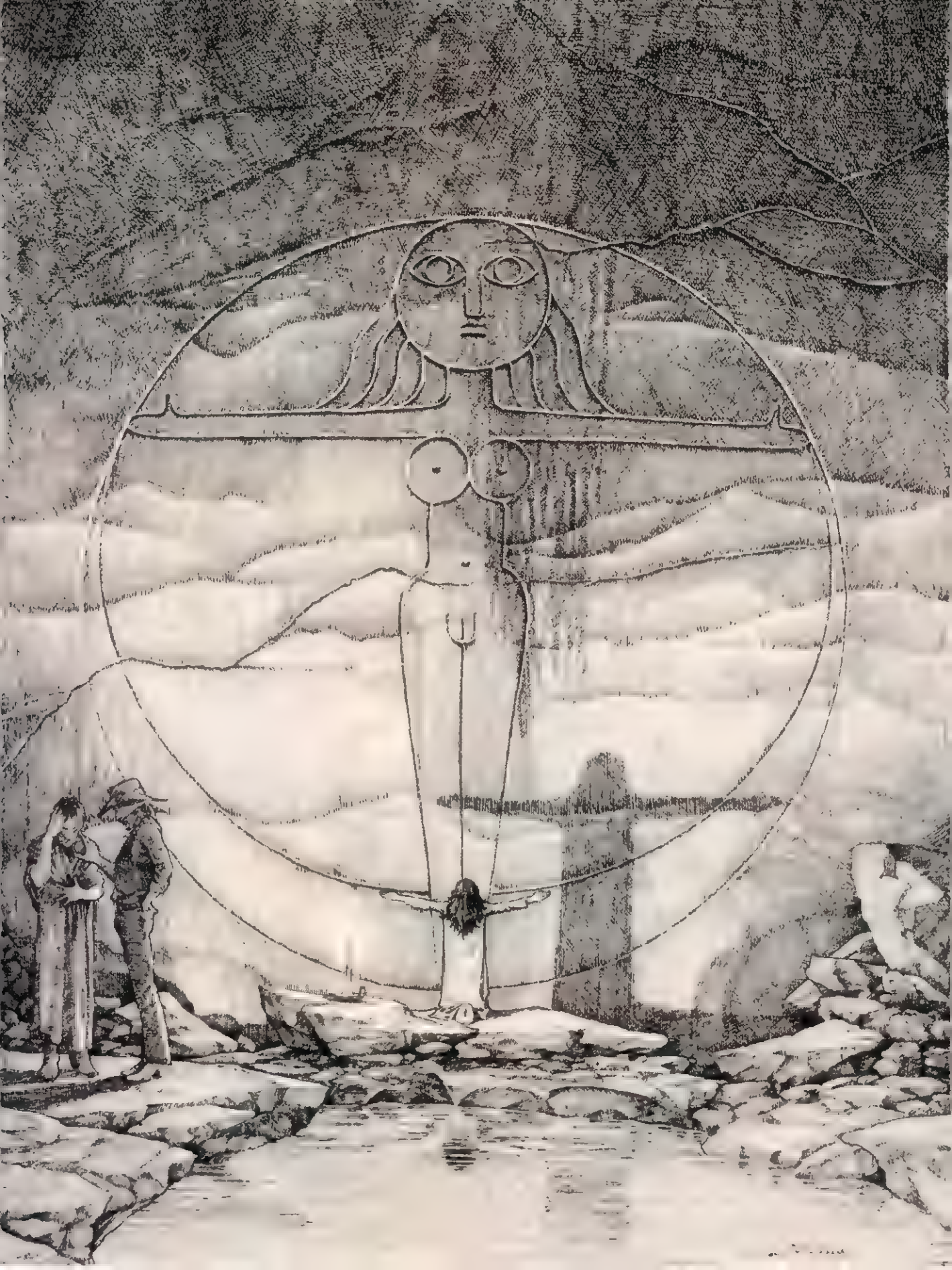
UH OH!
Cūme!
?


LOOKS LIKE BIG TROUBLE, DOC.


WATCH YOUR STEP HERE, DOC. WE GOT WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL YOUR BASIC YAWNING ABYSS OVER ON THE LEFT.
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! WHO BUILT THESE STEPS?
YA GOT ME. THEY WERE HERE BEFORE THE INDIANS.

COURSE, SHE KNOWS, BUT SHE'S NOT TALKIN'.

IT'S OKAY, DOC. WE'VE COME TO A VERY HOLY PLACE, SACRED TO WOMEN. MEN AREN'T ALLOWED TO LAY EYES ON IT.



BACK AT **HANGMAN'S CORNERS**, THE TOWNSPEOPLE HAVE NAUGHT TO DO BUT WAIT AND WONDER, AT THE **NOOSE AND GIBBET SALOON**....

...SO, SHERIFF, EV'RY THREE 'R FOUR WEEKS, CHICKENS JUST UP'N DISAPPEAR. THAT'S THAT... FIVE, MAYBE SIX HEAD. GONE!

POOR OL' SADIE (SOB), I LET YA DOWN... DOWN, **DOWN!** (HIC) (SOB) **HEY**, WHATSIS BLACK STUFF INNA BOTTOM O' MY CUP?

IT'S COFFEE, SHERIFF. TRY IT.

SHERIFF! TWO O'THE SEARCH PARTY ARE **RIDIN' IN!**

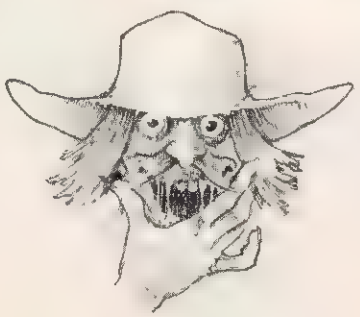
IT'S WILBUR AND TH' KID!

COUPLA DRINKS, BILL, WE'RE PLUMB TUCKERED OUT.

SHERIFF, LEMME TELL YA, IT WERE AWFUL!

WE FOUND MARIA, SHERIFF. WE SHORE DID. BUT, LORDY, SHE WERE ALL COVERED WITH THEM WEIRD LI'L HOLES AN' LOOKIN' MEANER'N A SHAVED APE!

ANY O' YOU 'UNS HAPPEN T'CATCH SIGHT O' **SADIE**?



WELL, DEAR READER, ENOUGH FOR NOW. ALL THE DISPARATE ELEMENTS OF OUR ADVENTURE APPEAR TO BE DRIFTING TOWARD SOME KIND OF DRAMATIC SYNTHESIS, AND THAT'S AS IT SHOULD BE. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT MONTH FOR THE NERVE-SHATTERING, HORRIFYING AND, YET SATISFYING **CONCLUSION.**

While science fiction portrays the mind's positive potential and the wonders it might achieve, horror dramatizes a similar projection of scenes from situations we hope will never come to pass. Whereas science fiction operates on the premise of realized textbook science, horror germinates from the abstract sciences—psychology and theology. Science fiction, then, is a lunar expedition. Horror waits on the dark side of the moon.

"There is no such thing as a realistic film," insists David Cronenberg, Canada's most bankable horror specialist. "And, when I say that," he clarifies, "I'm really only echoing Nabokov when he said there was no such thing as a realistic novel. Each novel, each film, is the invention of a world. If you watch films that were called 'ultrarealistic' at the time of their release, like *Marty*, they're all so theatrical and stagey that you can see they aren't in any sense reality. My film *The Brood could* be seen as the 'nightmare' version of *Kramer vs. Kramer*—and for that reason, in my opinion, it's *more* realistic. I mean, *Kramer* already looks a bit creaky. Where's the anger, the rage, the hatred, the fury? I didn't see any of that! I've been through a similar experience, and I came out of *Kramer* laughing! *The Brood* is more realistic in terms of the *underlife* of the situation. When Kramer goes to sleep at night, he dreams *The Brood*."

Cronenberg is one of several serious, literate men who have come to specialize in films of the fantastic. It is a mostly thankless profession, since audiences largely perceive horror as a cheap emotion, and because many producers feel (and rightly so) that anything with tits and blood will make a buck. Because horror sells shocks, horror films are advertised on television in hit-and-run fashion, with the prodigious work undistinguished from that of the hacks. But there are directors who find, in the genre, room in which to experiment structurally and visually, while retaining the narrative restrictions of "ordinary films," imposed on them by horror's incessant demand for logic. Horror isn't cheap, it's a "dodgy" and delicate emotion, and it takes an artist to find its widest yet most individualized applications. Cronenberg defines the genre's dichotomy well: "One of the reasons the genre is so potent is that there's more material common to all human beings in the black lagoons of the unconscious than in the more superficial areas of the mind. Even so, I've had people react to the *oddest* things in my films, due to subjective elements unique to their own lives."

George A. Romero, who burst the genre's barricades with *Night of the Living Dead*, in 1968, is a maverick director for a variety of reasons: 1) he refuses to work outside his hometown of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; 2) he works almost exclusively with local, unknown talent; 3) his horror films are often too realistically described to jive with the mainstream, commercial horror market; and 4) he claims he isn't a "film student," but that he loves movies, instead, "in the old-fashioned sense." It's hard to imagine there could be anything old-fashioned about him.

Since Pennsylvania is hardly Transylvania, one might ask, Why Pittsburgh? "I dislike the influence of Hollywood on filmmaking," Romero complains. "For me, it's like a nagging headache to watch a new American film; the headache comes from scenes shot the same way, lit the same way, done with the same audio techniques. Nothing ever jumps off the screen; there's never anything experimental or texturally different. So I stay away from their sound stages and mixing facilities. *I* hate having to bring a film into a sound-effects shop!"

Logistics is Romero's only self-imposed restriction, and even that lends his films a sense of the Gothic in everyday life. Each of his films, from *Night of the Living Dead* to the new *Knightriders* (1981), adds to an *oeuvre* determined to spark a new mythology. The walking dead of *Night* and *Dawn of the Dead* are as close as his generation has come to developing a fresh, allegorical myth. *Martin* (1977), one of the few films bold enough to treat vampirism as a sado-sexual disease (as opposed to a spiritual deficiency), never ventures beyond suburban settings but manages to defrock vampirism of its mythic reverberations. The film's unforgettable opening scene—in which Martin drugs an unsuspecting woman via syringe, strips her, and uses a razor blade to reach the blood he requires for his orgasm—is framed with the same matter-of-fact, documentarian lens that describes Martin's door-to-door grocery deliveries. *Dawn of the Dead* (1979) is largely set inside a huge shopping mall, where four sur-

At a time of uninteresting mainstream cinema, the horror film is experiencing one of the most fascinating evolutions of its history.

George Romero

vivors of the zombie plague hide and, eventually, play house. The film focuses on the horror of human values, as the protagonists find themselves drawn more to looting the mall than to survival. *Knightriders*, though not a horror film, is a treatment of Arthurian legends in modern garb—rather like James Joyce's adapting the bones of Homer's *Odyssey* for his modern-day novel *Ulysses*.

Romero's penchant for improvisation keeps his work unpredictable. It's a shock to learn that *Martin*'s scenes in the fire-gutted church, so pertinent to its central thesis, were a lucky break: "We got to Braddock, saw the burnt-out church, and I decided that it *did* make structural sense, that it added another element broadening the collapse of religious order." Improvisation can also lead to slapstick, as in *Dawn*, when a group of bikers pommels the zombie hordes with cream pies. "I find humor keeps an audience from getting constipated or freezing up," Romero explains. "Mixing horror and humor's a little like mixing up football plays; the object is to get down onto the field. So, if I get the idea to have somebody hurl pies at the zombies, I'll *do* it—without trying to make something more macabre out of it, or making a point, or distorting what it is. It's outrageous, sure, but if I tried to apologize for making the joke, then I'd fuck it up. Some people will laugh at it, but what can I tell you? It worked for *me*. At least it's not some obscure pretension!"

The frank, nonjudgmental depiction of violence in Romero's films (shotgun decapitations, cannibal feasts) helps us to see that the suggestive horror films of the 1930s and '40s, with their thematic emphasis on good and their visual restraint of evil, stood as agents of a truly religious era. Today, when good and evil hold little or no theological meaning for audiences, graphic horror films exist to affect them the only way they can—on a gut level. Does Romero feel this generation of filmgoers represents a shift in values, and, if so, toward what?

"I think it's mostly toward the individual, the whole Me Generation thing," he contends. "The object of most horror films used to be the restoration of a previously existing order, but nobody wants to see *that* happen anymore. The attitude of viewers has changed, just as their life-styles have changed. There's this tremendous despair in society now that sees us heading down the road to some kind of destruction—if it's not nuclear, it'll be ecological or economic or whatever. So the format has had to change to meet the kind of viewer produced by this atmosphere."

The reason David Cronenberg's work is important is that it *does* bring new values to the genre. To suit the ideals of the Me Era, Cronenberg has exchanged the old good vs. evil conflict for the Cartesian conflict of mind and body—or, to paraphrase W. B. Yeats, that terror felt by "the immortal soul tied to the body of a dying animal." As L. L. Whyte's book *The Unconscious Before Freud* mentions, "It is only after Descartes that we find first the idea and then the term 'unconscious mind' entering European thought." This insight lends Cronenberg's work an extra credence. Since horror comes from the unconscious, it seems right that Descartes should be the figure to oust Christ from the symbology of the horror film, now that we understand the genre better. We owe this understanding not only to Cronenberg but also to the late Michael Reeves, whose *The Conqueror Worm* (1968) was the first film to view good and evil as a schism in people, rather than as ultimates. A new mythology *must* collapse the old one.

In Cronenberg's four films, which contain an unusually tight uniformity of vision, horror often results from someone's search for artistic affirmation—hence, immortality. Though there are no things Cronenberg believes man was meant to leave alone, each of his films illustrates the room for miscalculation that exists between unfinished, mortal arts like science and complete, immortal truth and knowledge. The conflict of mind and body is also manifest in the division of stillness and movement that recurs throughout his stories. "If you want to simplify it," he says, "*mind* is intricate narrative and *body* is visceral thrill. In each film, both are represented but not always perfectly blended, which seems to be part of the conflict. Even a car chase can have intellectual repercussions, when you consider how a car collapses time and space for people—they've truly changed society in that way."

One of the most peculiar qualities in his work is the way in which Cronenberg (like Georges Franju and Mario Bava before him) extracts bizarre essences of beauty from his more "repulsive" compositions—almost an offshoot of his Cartesian stance, as it causes the viewer's mind to separate aesthetically from the body of the identifying character, in order to savor the *frissons* aroused by the bloody, dreamlike details. In *They Came from Within* (1975), a man speaks to the large, parasitic worm burrowing under the skin of his stomach; in *The Brood* (1979), Samantha Eggar licks amniotic gore from the body of her newly birthed infant clone; and in *Scanners* (1981), a

David Cronenberg

John Carpenter

psychic's head explodes in surreal curds of colorful tissue after an onslaught of psychic counterconcentration. Cronenberg's knack for making such images strangely compelling explains why all his original cuts have received MPAA X ratings, with the result that each has been snipped (by a few frames) to suit R-certificate specifications.

As Arthur Koestler notes in *The Act of Creation* (a book for which Cronenberg professes great fondness), "When Rembrandt had the audacity to paint the carcass of a flayed ox, he taught the public to see and accept behind the repulsive particular subject the timeless patterns of light, color, and shadow." This would be the key to enjoying Cronenberg's audacious craft. A longtime interest in the writings of Vladimir Nabokov ("His attitudes crystallized my own," he says) keeps Cronenberg philosophical on the subject: "In the past, people have asked whether I worry about the effects of my imagery on children and, lately, I've been expressing myself as Nabokov did, by saying that as a citizen and father I have social responsibilities but, as an artist, I have absolutely *no* responsibility to *anyone*."

Almost all of the great novels written since 1950 have been produced by persons who, like Nabokov, taught in universities to support the production of their fictions—onto which the academic ambience rubs off. Since the arrival of Truffaut in the 1950s, more and more films have been directed by former critics and professors, so that film has become as self-conscious as contemporary literature, has indeed *become* a literature. Yet there are hazards. To quote Martin Amis, in a recent essay on Nabokov: "Writing about writing is a feature of twentieth-century literature that people are only beginning to resign themselves to. At its best, such writing can fill the place of the thing whose absence it mourns. At its worst, it is simply a new way of writing badly (only the prodigiously talented need apply)."** The presence of the latter in the horror genre is perhaps best exemplified by the overtly Hitchcockian thrillers of Brian DePalma, whose 1974 film *Obsession* owes so much to *Vertigo* that it is all but unwatchable. DePalma enjoys celluloid as a means of burglarizing that large house now vacated by his mentor. On the other hand, John Carpenter and Joe Dante wield the device with charm and insight. Both have documented the genre in print—Dante, for *Castle of Frankenstein* magazine; and Carpenter, in three self-published boyhood fanzines.

While Romero and Cronenberg represent the artistic integration of graphic screen horror, Carpenter and Dante are using their academic roots to evolve what could be termed the *bibliographic* horror film. Their films are playfully introverted and bubble with submerged jokes and references—like those in Nabokov's novels!—which enrich surface texture, reward repeated viewings, and act as a secret handshake among the *cognoscenti*.

The best measuring stick for demonstrating their range of erudition may be their methodology for naming characters. In *Assault on Precinct 13* (1976), Carpenter's borderline genre tribute to Howard Hawks's *Rio Bravo*, there are numerous *hommages* to persons associated with the film: Carpenter edited the picture himself under the pseudonym "John T. Chance" (after John Wayne's character in *Bravo*), and he named his two lead females Leigh and Julie (after *Bravo* scripters Leigh Brackett and Jules Furthman). *Halloween* (1978) has, in addition to a "Brackett," a few monicker references to *Psycho*, underlining the presence of Jamie Lee Curtis, Janet Leigh's daughter. Carpenter's newest film, *Escape from New York* (1981), features characters named "Arthur Cronenberg" and "Romero." "When I started with that editing credit on *Assault*," Carpenter admits, "I was doing it for myself, because I had no faith that anyone else would pick up on it. Not a lot of people in Hollywood who work in films are aware of film history *or* these subtleties. Only later did I find out that there *are* people who are familiar with this. So now, perhaps, I'm aiming at *them*."

A somewhat broader sense of academic fun can be found in Joe Dante's films. Dante's cast of characters in *The Howling* (1981) reads like a veritable casebook of werewolf lore, ranging from the fairly easy Terry Fisher (that's *Terence* Fisher, who directed what Dante calls "the last substantial werewolf movie"—*The Curse of the Werewolf*) to the significantly difficult Jack Molina (*Jacinto Molina* is the real name of Spanish werewolf actor Paul Naschy). *The Howling* also boasts a canvas full of sight gags—the Chaney, Jr., *Wolf Man* on late-night TV, cans of Wolf chili, someone reading Thomas Wolfe's *You Can't Go Home Again*, and so on into absurdity. Dante's intent is not merely to amuse, but "to show how pervasive the influence of werewolf lore *is* in modern society. There are two kinds of tradition with werewolves. There's actually believing in them, and

** Martin Amis, *Vladimir Nabokov: A Tribute* (New York: Morrow, 1980), p. 87.

Joe Dante

there's mass culture. I learned at the movies, and that's generally true of the rest of the audience. What *we* know comes from the media."

What makes *The Howling* so innovative (aside from Rob Bottin's startling, state-of-the-art makeup effects) is Dante's articulated concern with *precisely this* inconsistency that we all have in our relationship with media and mass culture. *The Howling* begins and ends with a screen full of alpha waves—"which, as we all know, calm us," Dante chuckles. The film's heroine, a TV-news anchorwoman, is followed, in the first thirty minutes, through a disorienting tunnel of obscene phone calls, TV-studio technology, porn peep shows, flashing cameras, and wailing sirens, into the ultimate disorientation of psychoanalysis. "So, by the time it shows up in the picture," Dante says, "the illusion of the werewolf is only one more illusion the audience has bought into. People will accept everything they see on TV, within a certain framework. They'll give the medium a certain amount of credence and no more." Subsequently, when our heroine is bitten at the film's end, she turns to the mass forum of television to expose this very real threat to society—and sprouts fangs and talons, *on camera*. Dante: "And there is suddenly the possibility that they're not going to buy into it, *because* it's on television. There's always the possibility that what we see on TV isn't real. I can remember, during the Kennedy assassination and the missile crisis, the feeling of release I would get whenever a commercial came on. And the warning delivered in this picture segues directly into a dog-food commercial!"

John Carpenter, the most popularly celebrated director working in the genre, derives a variety of effects from his bibliographic devices. At their most overt, as with the names listed above, they simply pinpoint his position in regard to an *hommage* of his own career. (On a nightstand in *Halloween* sits a paperback novelization of *Dark Star*, his first film.) But, at their subtlest and most complex, as in the ideal environment of *Halloween*, his references work subliminally to indicate the depth of his characters' superstitions. In one scene, Jamie Lee Curtis looks out a window for the "boogyman" spotted by her baby-sitting charge, and as she does, relevant dialogue from the film *Forbidden Planet* issues from a background television ("There's nothing out there, soldier." "Sure there is!"). In this superstitious synchronization of fact and fiction, Carpenter's antagonist—a sanitarium escapee—becomes a monster of the id, a creature of the psyche, of myth.

"The film started out to be like all the other maniac-on-the-loose films," Carpenter recalls. "But I began to think, since Halloween is such a fabulous holiday anyway, a day when we venerate and reawaken certain legends, that I ought to go along with that and let this man actually *become* supernatural, *become* evil itself—but not in such a pretentious way that it would put the audience off."

Wisely, Carpenter prefaces the merging of mortal escapee and mythic maniac earlier on, with a scene in which Curtis is called upon in her English class to discuss "Samuels's use of Fate" in some imaginary, metaphysical novel. Though she hasn't been listening in class (she's been staring out the window at the station wagon driven by the escapee, parked across the street), she finds she *knows* the answer—that Samuels saw Fate as a basic elemental truth, as real as Earth, Air, Fire, or Water—and we, the audience, sense with her that the arrival of Halloween has somehow made this true, at least for a day.

The Fog (1980) also exhibits Carpenter's highly original talent for mythic cultivation, and his plan to remake *The Thing* in accordance with the John W. Campbell story "Who Goes There?" certainly bodes well for his future. Interestingly, neither Carpenter nor Romero feels distraught about the release of such films as *The Day After Halloween*, *Beyond the Fog*, and *Zombie*. Whatever their quality (or lack thereof), they perpetuate the myth. Even David Cronenberg, who remains unimitated, says with an eager smile, "It would please me very much if *Scanners* became an element of the new mythology"—though his plans do not include a sequel.

If you doubt that Vladimir Nabokov seems to have played an unusual role in the new mythology, listen to Joe Dante: "Nabokov has almost replaced Brecht for this generation of filmmakers. When people went beyond the realm of film, it was called Brechtian. Today, the same thing is Nabokovian." Nabokov's *Ada*, a novel set in a dream world, can be seen momentarily on a sofa in *Dawn of the Dead*'s shopping-mall Shangri-la, and its seconds onscreen (Nabokov's photo addressing his departed world with weariness and pain) speak reverberantly about the artifice of consumerist appeal. (He also used a paperback of B. F. Skinner's behaviorist manifesto *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* to a similar end, in the background of *Martin*'s opening attack sequence. Our glimpse of the book sends the same shivers of subdued irony.)

These are not men to rest idly on their laurels—George Romero is about to begin *Creep Show*, an anthological horror "comic" written by Stephen King; David Cronenberg is currently penning *Videodrome*, a horrific screenplay, at his home in Toronto; John Carpenter has initiated preproduction on *The Thing*; and Joe Dante, while fielding offers from various studios, is looking for a film that will "test me in a different direction," as he tries to interest producers in a film based on John Brunner's *The Sheep Look Up*.

The horror boom being spearheaded by these four men contains other growing *oeuvres* worthy of our attention—the films of Oliver Stone (*Seizure*, *The Hand*); Tobe Hooper (*Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Funhouse*); Bob Clark (*Deathdream*, *Murder by Decree*); Alfred Sole (*Holy Terror*, *Tanya's Island*); and Tom Savini, who, while not a director, is the makeup talent behind *Dawn of the Dead*, *Maniac*, and *The Burning* (his presence often makes the work of other men his own).

At a time of uninteresting mainstream cinema, the horror film is experiencing one of the most fascinating evolutions of its history. As Cronenberg assures us, "I think the genre's happy. It'll take care of itself."

Timothy R. Lucas is a regular contributor to Cinéfantastique *and the author of an intensive study on the late Italian film director Mario Bava. He is also at work on his fifth novel.*

Born Again
EVERY DAY... TH' SAME SHIT!
I FEEL LIKE I'M FALLING APART!
NOBODY...

TO...
TO PICK UP...
TH'
PIECES!
AHHH
OMPH!
WHAT TH'...
WATCH IT!
OOPS!
COME ON, HE IS ALL GONE!
WE MUST ALL WORK TOGETHER!
LET'S HURRY...
I WANT TO HAVE SOME FUN.
LEAPIN' LIZARDS!
$

BRING MORE PAPER STRIPS!
HURRY... YOU'RE SLOWING DOWN THE WORK!
I'LL HOLD... YOU PULL!
GIVE ME A LONGER STRIP!
HMMM...
ALL FINISHED...
DON'T YOU THINK OUR VERSION IS BETTER?

JUDGMENT DAY
by DICK MATENA
ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER
...AND THEN HE WILL SEND HIS SON BACK TO EARTH AND THERE WILL BE WOES AND PAIN AMONGST THEE!... IT'S ALL IN HERE!... SAVE YOUR SOULS FROM A FAITH WORSE THAN DEATH!... FIVE CENTS ONLY!

...FOR THEY WILL LIVE IN ETERNAL SHAME AND TEARS: THE THIEVES!... THE DRUNKS!...
1
2
3
4
5
6
8
9

...THE MURDERERS! ...THE WHORES! ...THE LIARS! ...THE HYPOCRITES! NONE WILL BE SPARED!
5
6

...NONE OF THEM WHO TURNED THEIR BACKS ON HIM AND MADE HIM SAD...
7

4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
...FOR HIS ANGER WILL BE... OOPS! THERE GOES MY BOOKLET...
...HOW VERY CLUMSY! HAHA! HA!...
NONE WILL BE SPARED! CERTAINLY NOT THE PEEPING TOMS!
SLASH
WELL, WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T YOUNG FRANKIE LEE, THE CARPENTER, WHOSE FATHER IS DECEASED!... HOW ARE YOU, MY BOY?
BETTER THAN MY POOR OLD MAN, MR. PRIEST! HE DIED IN TERRIBLE PAIN, CRYING OUT YOUR NAME AND CURSING YOU! WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM, YOU WICKED MESSENGER?

I JUST LAID MY HAND UPON HIM AND THEN HE TURNED BLACK ALL OVER!... IF EVER THERE WAS A DOOMED SOUL, IT WAS HIS!...
I DON'T KNOW, JUDAS!... HE LEFT ME TWENTY-FOUR WOMEN STRANDED IN A HOUSE...
...AND IN THAT HOUSE THERE'S A WINDOW FOR EV'RY ONE OF THEM!... LIKE TO SEE IT?
YOU'RE A CHILD OF YOUR FATHER, FRANKIE! ...ALWAYS TRYING TO SEDUCE THE WEAK!...
...BUT I ADMIT THAT I AM A BIT CURIOUS... FOUR-AND-TWENTY WINDOWS AND A WOMAN'S FACE IN EV'RY ONE?... WILL THIS DO, MY BOY?
BECAUSE OF THIS ROLL OF TENS, JUDAS PRIEST...
...THE HOUSE WILL NOT BE JUST A HOUSE, BUT A HOME!... PARADISE!...
DON'T SPEAK MY NAME TOO LOUD, SON!
PSSST! MR. PRIEST! ...STILL WANNA SEE SOMETHING?

NO!
BACK, SATAN! BACK!
I KNEW HE'D REACT THAT WAY!
HIWAY 51
61
7
91
...MOST MEN DO! THAT'S WHY I WENT INTO THE CONVENT IN THE FIRST PLACE!
A PITY! YOU COULD'VE MADE A MILLION!
MONSIEUR C.! MON CAPITAIN! OVER DZERE! LOOK!
WHAT EES EET, MON FILS?
EET EES HEEM, EES IT NOT?
AH... OUI! DEF-INEET-LY!
..SO DZAT EES WHERE HE HID ALL DZOSE YEARS!

...AAH! AIR...!
1
6
BUT... WHAT HAPPENED...? ...WHERE IS EVERY-BODY?
GONE!
WHO ARE YOU?
I AM THE SON OF MY FATHER! I'M HERE TO SEP-ARATE THE GOOD FROM THE BAD!
HALLELUJAH! THE DAY HAS COME!

1
YES! I ARRIVED AT THE EXACT MOMENT YOU FELL INTO THE WATER! A SHAME, FOR I KNOW HOW LONG YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS!
YOU'RE HERE! THAT IS WHAT COUNTS!... BUT I WOULDN'T HAVE RECOGNIZED YOU! I THOUGHT YOU'D LOOK... DIFFERENT!
HOW DO YOU MEAN?
WELL, YOU KNOW... DRESSED IN A LONG SHEET, HAIR DOWN TO YOUR SHOULDERS, AND SOME SORT OF A RING AROUND YOUR HEAD!...
OH! THAT HUMBUG! THAT'S WHAT THOSE OLD PAINTERS MADE ME LOOK LIKE! I'M A CHILD OF MY TIME! COME! FOLLOW ME!
OF COURSE! BUT... PRAY TELL, WHERE TO?
6
TO THE PLACE FROM WHERE EVERYBODY WILL LEAVE TO STAND TRIAL... I MUST TAKE CARE THINGS WON'T END UP IN UTTER CHAOS...
...FOR MOST PEOPLE FEAR TO BE JUDGED!... DON'T THEY, MR. PRIEST?
YES!... I MUST SAY, IT IS ALL SO STRANGE...
REALITY IS STRANGE, JUDAS! STRANGER THAN THE FICTION YOU TOLD OVER THE YEARS!

SIERDAM
21 05
...THOSE NAMES, I UNDERSTAND! THE TRIALS WILL BE HELD ALL OVER THE WORLD?...
WHY NOT? AFTER ALL, MY FATHER IS CHAIRMAN OF THE BIGGEST MULTINATIONAL THAT EVER WAS!
3
NEW YORK
TOKYO NAGASAKI HIROSHIMA
ROME
LONDON VATICAN
21.00
WHO ARE THE MEN WITH THE DOGS?
PERSONNEL OF DADDY'S! YOU KNOW, IT TOOK HIM SIX DAYS TO BUILD ALL THIS AND I GOT ONLY ONE DAY TO BRING IT DOWN! SO... I NEED ALL THE HELP I CAN GET!
NO! PLEASE! NOT MY CHILD!
WHAT IS THAT?
...PLEASE.. PLEASE!
YOU! OVER THERE!
.. AND YOU, WOMAN... STAND BACK!
MY!... HOW CRUEL!
YES! I DESPISE THOSE GUYS!... BUT SOMETIMES THEY'RE VERY USEFUL, SO I JUST CLOSE MY EYES!
MOTHER! MOTHER!

THAT'S YOUR TRAIN OVER THERE!
23.00
MOSCOW
MY TRAIN?... BUT... WHERE AM I GOING?... I DON'T EVEN HAVE A TICKET!
YOU WON'T NEED ONE! I MADE THE RESERVATION FOR YOU!...
BUT THESE ARE CATTLE CARS! I CANNOT...
OF COURSE YOU CAN'T! THAT'S WHY I BOOKED YOU FIRST-CLASS...
...TOGETHER WITH SOME OF MY FATHER'S FAVORITES! GET IN!
IT'S DARK IN HERE! I CAN'T SEE A THING!
JUST WALK ON AND YOU'LL SEE THE LIGHT YOU TOOK FROM SO MANY PEOPLE!
THE LIGHT I... WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY...? AH, YES! THERE IT IS!

...BUT ...BUT ...BUT...
1
35499

...THIS COMPARTMENT IS FULL OF CORPSES!...
OH, NO! I JUST WOKE THEM! PART OF THE JOB, YOU KNOW!

JOIN THEM, JUDAS PRIEST! THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU!
...NO...

OH, YES! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU A LONG, LONG TIME!
...AND HERE YOU ARE...
...AT LAST!
...NO...

END

Photograph: William Coupon

For me, listening to music is an almost nonverbal experience. Half the time I don't even *notice* if some clown yelps a string of words at me. However interesting or insightful the lyrics might be, if the music itself doesn't captivate me on various congruent levels—visceral, sensual, and cerebral—I just yawn and resume lice-picking my mate's scalp. Verbal information should be an integrated element in the sonic fabric, not something that protrudes from the front. Think of the difference as analogous to Altman's and Coppola's sound-dialogue montages (in *Apocalypse Now!* and *The Conversation*), contrasted with films featuring screen-bottom subtitle promenades. Which do *you* think is the more efficient conveyor of information?

As most practitioners conceptualize the word-music elements separately, the rare true integrations of the two—such as Rupert Hine's *Immunity* (A&M) and Tuxedomoon's *Desire* (Ralph)—immediately stand apart and push my buttons. Britisher Hine describes constructing his first solo album "from the top down," that is, beginning with the vocal tracks and filling in the music underneath, finishing up with the rhythm sections (the reverse of most rock albums). In a very real sense, Hine employs synthesizers, tape treatments, and some traditional instruments to illustrate the fear and anxiety overtly delineated in the LP's incisive lyrics (written by Jeannette Obstoj). A subtle uneasy aura, an unsettled stomach sensation that the listener isn't fully conscious of, results, because at a casual level the songs are rather bright, melodic, and accessible. On *Desire*, Tuxedomoon effectively blend the wrenching emotionalism carried in the lyrics with a languid, romantic melancholy and a needling undercurrent of tension—quite a step from the claustrophobic despair of *Half-Mute*, their debut. Both seductive and disturbing, *Desire* lulls the listener with salving, fluid melody while simultaneously pricking his security membrane with naked expressions of frustrations and need.

Quite a different word-music blend, Robert Fripp's vinyl documentation of his 1980 dance-music project, *The League Of Gentlemen* (Polydor), montages a demonstration-lecture on the aspects of foot-oriented rock (FOR). The music is nearly all instrumental, danceable, and structurally rigid, while the spoken interludes (courtesy of the Roche sisters, J. G. Bennett, and a famous dork rock critic) offer thoughts on the musical process, some direct, some oblique, all wryly pertinent. Fripp's other current release, another album of Frippertronic Brand Wallpaper, *Let The Power Fall* (Editions EG), provides a further dose of the leapfrogging melody overlays that have become a favored part of old Bob's sonic wardrobe. Editions EG rereleased the two pioneering Fripp/Eno tape-loop collaborations, *(No Pussyfooting)* and *Evening Star*. Good old stuff, as are the Eno reissues Editions EG has also excreted, *Discrete Music* and *Music For Films*. This quartet of albums was, more than anything else, responsible for the mid-seventies crystallization of "ambient music," or sound that assumes a passive role in your environment, coloring rather than controlling.

Eno's latest collaboration, *My Life In That Bush Of Ghosts* (Sire), with Talking Head David Byrne, turns that concept on its ass—manipulating aspects of the environment, found sound objects, into a musical statement. Lacking dynamism other than a certain experimental audaciousness, *Ghosts* emerges as a funky *musique concrete* practice session for the more fully realized *Remain In Light* Talking Heads LP (which was recorded a few months later).

Two of the more skillful purveyors of visually evocative, imaginary-landscape synthesizer music, German trio Tangerine Dream and solo Frog Jean-Michel Jarre, both have new product for sale. Not surprisingly, Tangerine Dream's soundtrack for the film *Thief* (Elektra) is both hypnotic and expansively beautiful, while the addition of some throat-ripping guitar and abrasive metallic noise introduces a needed element of contrast. Similarly, Jarre's third LP, *Magnetic Fields* (Polydor), holds no surprises for those familiar with his earlier work (the hugely successful *Oxygene*). Skillfully realized and beautifully recorded, *Magnetic Fields* further explores Jarre's unabashed romanticism and naive melodic sense. Its velvety-smooth texture is also welcome decoration for any harsh-surfaced environment.

This month's off-the-wall (paper) favorite is guitarists Robert Quine and Jody Harris's *Escape* (Infidelity, distributed by Jem). Those fond of axe-handle mutilation of cliché rock structures should trot right out and buy this thing. Quine and Harris (of Richard Hell's Voidoids and the Raybeats, respectively) have liberated themselves from the confines of genre through a concentrated application of forced mutation. Who sez wallpaper can't have spikes?

This group of records communicates more to me, on a purely direct-to-subbrain basis, than any dozen rock howlers boasting the size of their girl friends' hooters, or growling the need to have a good time and party at great length. Words only cheapen the language.

—Lou Stathis

Wilson on Farmer

The Riverworld novels of Philip Jose Farmer—*To Your Scattered Bodies Go*, *The Fabulous Riverboat*, *The Dark Design*, and *The Magic Labyrinth*—have a multitude of virtues. They boast as much smashing-and-bashing melodrama as ten years' worth of old *Doc Savage* magazines, they are full of odd and interesting bits of historical and anthropological knowledge, and they raise all the important questions of philosophy within the context of a hero's quest that is both exciting and metaphysical. Best of all, taken together they weigh just enough to make an ideal bludgeon to batter the head of the next person who tells you that science fiction is not serious literature.

The basic plot, or McGuffin (as Hitchcock would call it), is so simple that only a genius could conceive it. Everybody in these books has already lived *and died* on Earth; now they are mysteriously alive again on another planet, Riverworld, with no knowledge of how this "miracle" was achieved, or who did it, or why. The major characters include the materialistic Mark Twain, the agnostic Sir Richard Burton, the newly converted religious mystic Hermann Goering (!), and the sentimental Alice Liddell (yes, the same one who inspired Lewis Carroll). They all struggle desperately to make sense out of their inexplicable situation and

to find a way to the North Pole of Riverworld, where the answer might be found. Along the way are feuds and battles and a gallery of other interesting characters (e.g., Tom Mix, Gilgamesh, Jesus Christ), but Farmer's greatest achievement, accomplished with brilliant understatement, is to make us gradually realize that our own situation here on Earth is just as mysterious as anything on Riverworld, or that the answer to the enigmas of Riverworld might also be the explanation of the paradoxes of our own peculiar existence here and now. Once again, in a brilliant climax, Farmer demonstrates my pet theory that sf is the only serious literature around these days, because it is the only literature that grapples with the ultimate questions of who or what we are and how we got here.

One minor criticism: Farmer still seems to believe that all the great characters of modern fiction are descended from the Greystokes, even though I have demonstrated in several places that they are actually descended from a peasant named Furbish Lousewart who got to Lady Greystoke while Lord Greystoke was off fighting in a crusade. A small historical error like that can be forgiven, however, since the rest of the Riverworld epic is so rich and wonderfully wrought.

Farmer on Wilson

Robert Anton Wilson (RAW) is the Kilgore Trout of the Quantum-Cum-Cthulhu universes. A rereading of his books always turns up something you'd not apprehended the first time. Also, he's very quotable, a true poet: that is, a master or testosterstoned mistress who (or which) is inspired by the muse, who sometimes looks like a moose and who dwells in the mews (labyrinthal or feline or both), a Krazy Kat bammed by the photonic Brick of Ignatz Mouse (read: Ignites Muse).

Though I'd heard much about the *Illuminatus Triology* (which RAW wrote with Robert Shea), it wasn't until five months ago that I read it. I was at once bewitched by this "paranoid" *Gulliver's Travels*. I also thought perhaps RAW had been somewhat influenced by me—which was only fair since I was, in turn, being influenced by him in a helicoidal or helicoital feedback. (But, as I and he maintain, every quantum that's rubbed elbows influences every other, though they're twenty-three billion light-years apart.)

Shea and RAW parted company, though not quantum influence, and RAW wrote *The Cosmic Trigger*, which unexplained the trilogy. He then went on with *Masks of the Illuminati* and *Schrödinger's Cat*, a three-volume *Allah's in Wonderland*. These books are vital for your health, though the recommendation carries more weight in this universe than in the one next door. Or is it vice versa?

RAW's works, though he may not know it, are codes. Work them out, and you'll know the secret of the universes. The codes are not sent by people/things from Sirius. RAW is confused. The messages do come through the area of Sirius, but they are from a "place" a googolplex of light-years and several universes *beyond* Sirius. Really? Not really. The source transceiver is here in Peoria, but the bending of the medium caused by SMUT (Space-Matter-Uber-Time) makes the codes come from way behind but along the line of sight of Sirius. (Dirty time is slower than clean time. And who dirtied it?)

I had a vision eight years ago. (Consider the octave and its temporality of significance.) The vision meant nothing until I read *Schrödinger's Cat*. Then I realized what I thought it meant. And now RAW will translate for me the meaning of this vision (from Peoria roundabout the line of sight of Sirius), and then I'll translate his translation for him. And so on. Feedback.

Though Melville omitted it, Captain Ahab said, "In one sense, Aleister Crowley is lower than whale shit. In another, he's as high as God's hat. The true shaman knows that God's hat is made out of dried whale shit."

Quick Takes: Divine Raiders, Babbling Brooks

The demented, the utilitarian—hallmarks of American camp humor—splatter helter-skelter in *Polyester*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and *History of the World, Part I*.

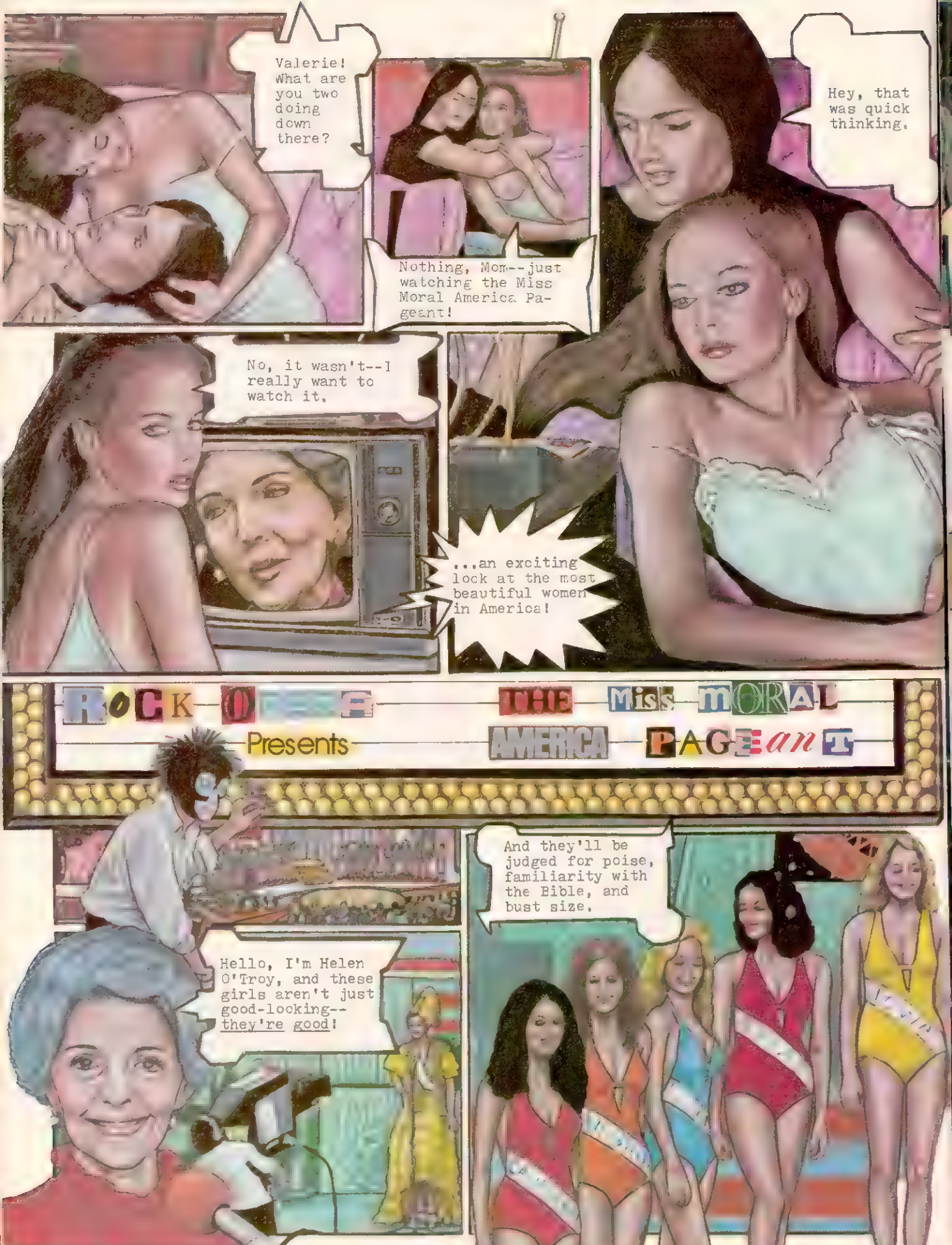
Accompanying admission to *Polyester*, a ludicrously aesthetic fractured flicker, is a stinky Odorama (skunk, roses, shit) card with the gross smells that engulf the heroine's sensitive nose and misplaced life. Undiluted, giant-economy-size drag-queen soap opera rages out of control with director John Waters's inspired romantic gene splicing of frustrated, 250-pound transvestite-housewife Divine and Tab Hunter as her multisexual dream lover cum true in a Corvette. *Polyester* accentuates the everyday drip-dry trials and tribulations and plastic Mediterranean furniture groupings necessary in order that suburban family tragedies of death by assassination, alcoholism, drugs, and abortion be thrilling and unmeaningful messages for the media to overexploit.

A "bum hero" in the Humphrey Bogart existential mold, Harrison Ford emerges in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* as the only bona fide camp movie superstar of the 1980s with a natural sense of ridiculous bravado humor acted out in make-believe stunts. Director Steven Spielberg's throbbing, neo-Hollywood classical cliffhanger toys with the closet S&M, mondo-macho, heroes-love-to-be-tortured adventures of Ford. As shady renegade archaeologist Indiana Jones, *Star Wars*'s king of deadpan comic-strip emotions competes with a gaggle of power-crazed Nazis in a Holy Grail race. His mission? To see if he can excavate the supernatural Ark of the Covenant before the brownshirts on speed find and send it home to the Fuhrer for bizarre fun and games and occult abuses. Ford exaggerates the sensibilities of the cynical (cynicism and anti-heroes are camp's lifeblood) role model of the Mr. Cool manipulator of American melting-pot ingenuity for the purpose of making the world safe for democracy.

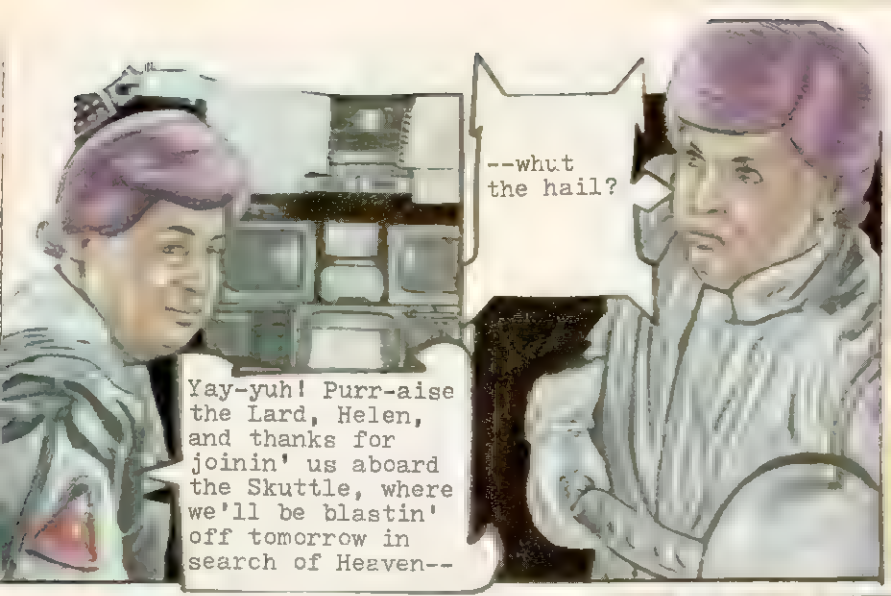
Consequently, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* fits perfectly in the category of grand opera as the highest form of tongue-in-cheek camp bullshit. And nobody gives better tongue-in-cheek camp bullshit dosed with charisma than does Harrison Ford.

While irreverent, totally artificial bad taste is the unachievable goal of pure camp satire, Mel Brooks's *History of the World, Part I* simply sucks. Ribald bathroom piss and teenie-weenie-penis-size jokes (as metaphors for the absurdity of life) hit rock bottom in Brooks's stoned vaudeville farce about how wretched life is when you're the perpetual underdog. The improbable spare-no-one, revolutionary sick-joke madness of *The Producers* and *Blazing Saddles* is nonexistent in "the Inquisition," the overworked, miss-the-point-of-religious-persecution, musical-production centerpiece of *History of the World, Part I*. Forget alternate world history, Mel.

—Daphne Davis

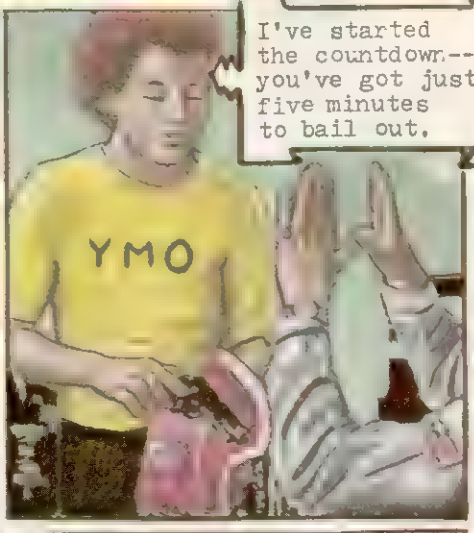

Valerie! What are you two doing down there?
Nothing, Mom--just watching the Miss Moral America Pageant!
Hey, that was quick thinking.
No, it wasn't--I really want to watch it.
...an exciting look at the most beautiful women in America!
ROCK OF
Presents
THE Miss MORAL AMERICA PAGEant
Hello, I'm Helen O'Troy, and these girls aren't just good-looking--they're good!
And they'll be judged for poise, familiarity with the Bible, and bust size.

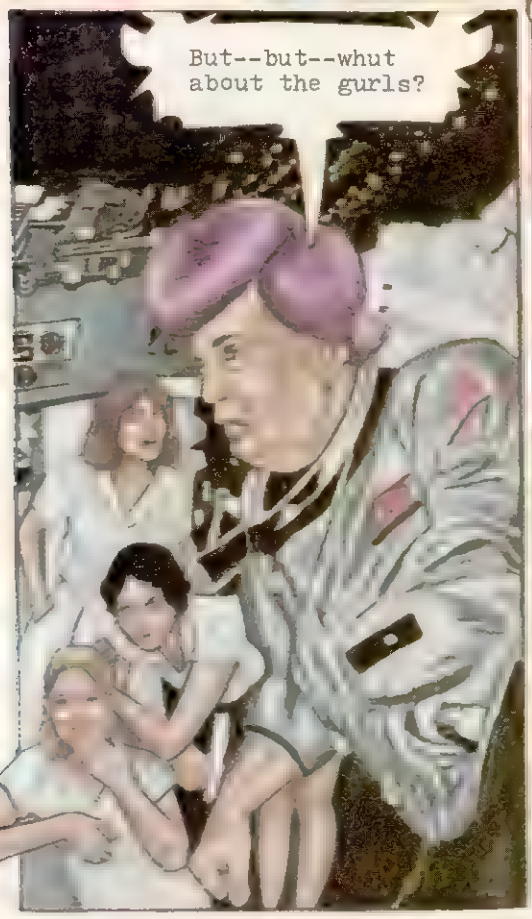
One by one, the judges were introduced: a Spanish dwarf with his own TV series,
the embalmed corpse of a New York models' agent,
--and me. I stood up, dazzled by the spotlights--
Onstage, the girls were winding down the Scripture Reading Event.
--the applause sign flashed, and for three seconds, I was famous.
And now, the "Miss Congenital" award will be presented by the secretary of state, General Banzai!
2 O that you a would kiss me with
the kisses of your b mouth!
For your love is better than wine,
3 your anointing oils are fragrant,
your name is oil poured out;
therefore the maidens love you.
4 Draw me after you, let us make
haste.
This is truly a great honor, sir!
Munch! Munch! Munch!
Um, now, over to the Space Skuttle, where the Revs. Ernest Angry and Jerry Fundwell are taking the twelve semifinalists on a tour--
--as they await the judges' ver--get your paw out of my dress, you goddamn monkey!
MUNCH


--whut the hail?
Yay-yuh! Purr-aise the Lard, Helen, and thanks for joinin' us aboard the Skuttle, where we'll be blastin' off tomorrow in search of Heaven--

I watched the TV monitor in horror, as my friend Marty emerged from the cockpit.

Behind me, the crowd sat in stunned silence.





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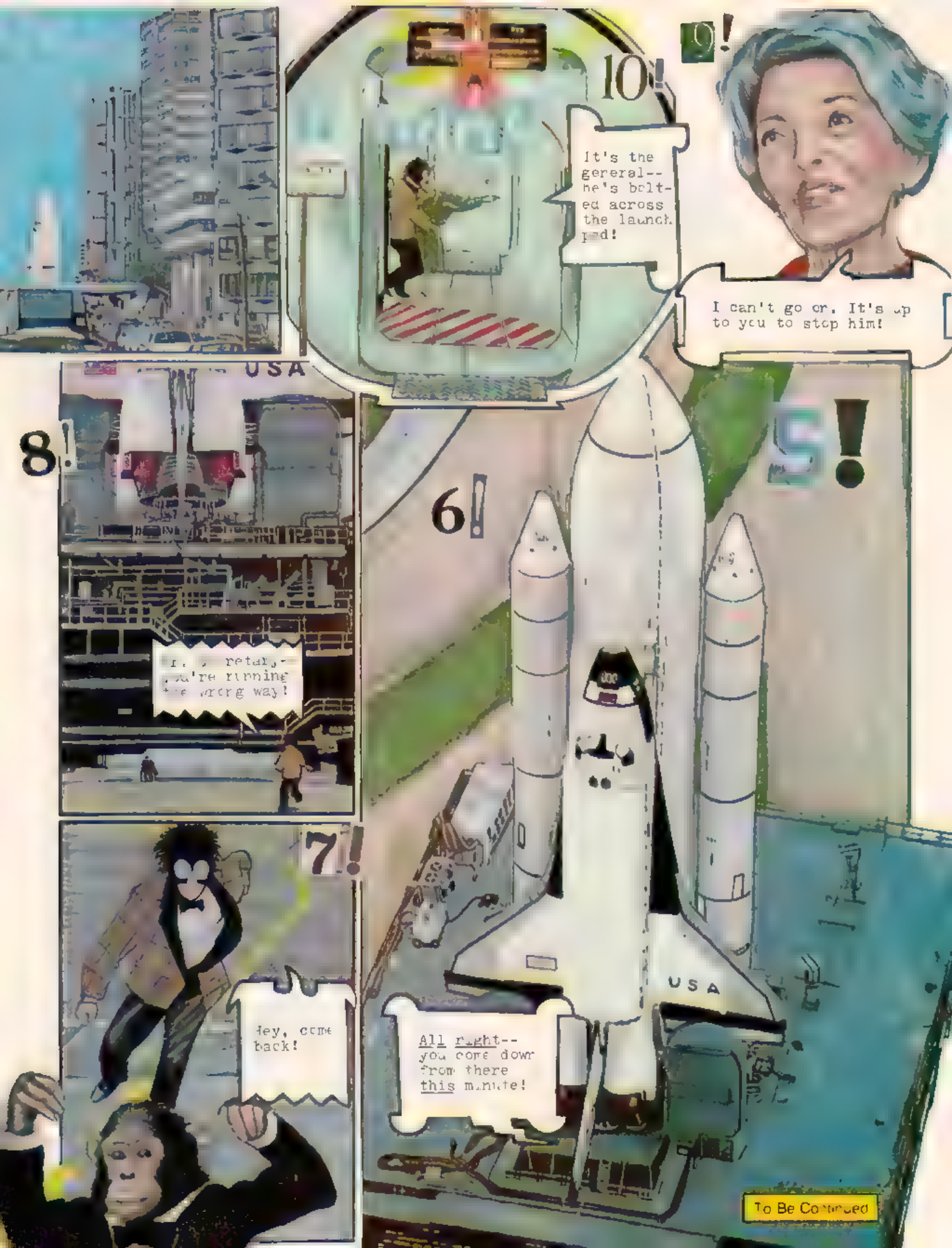
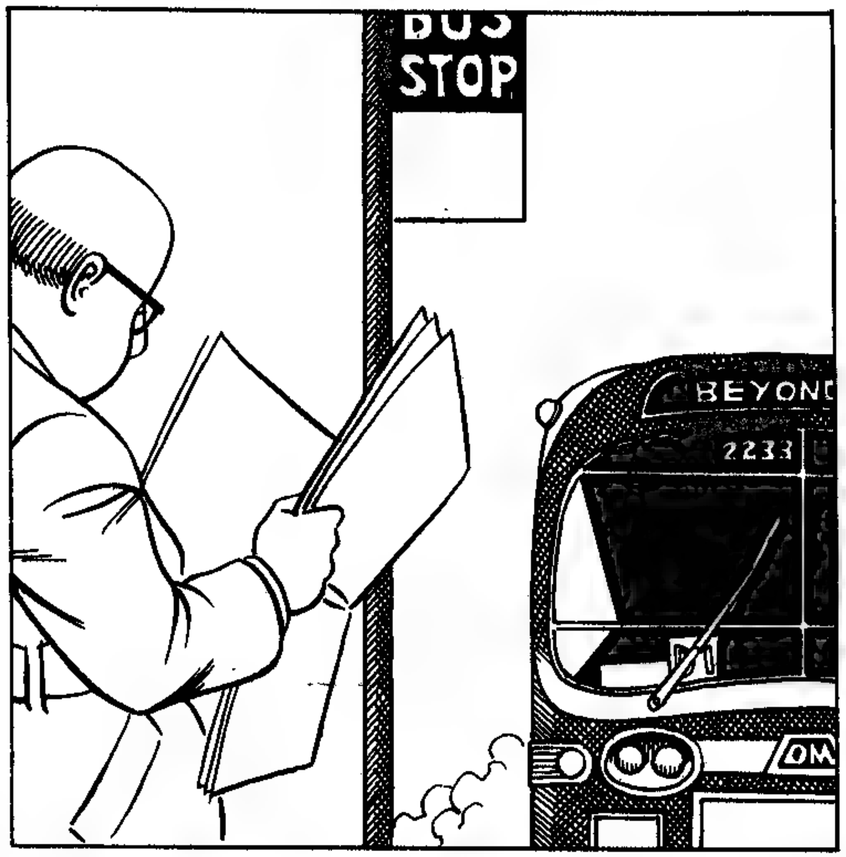
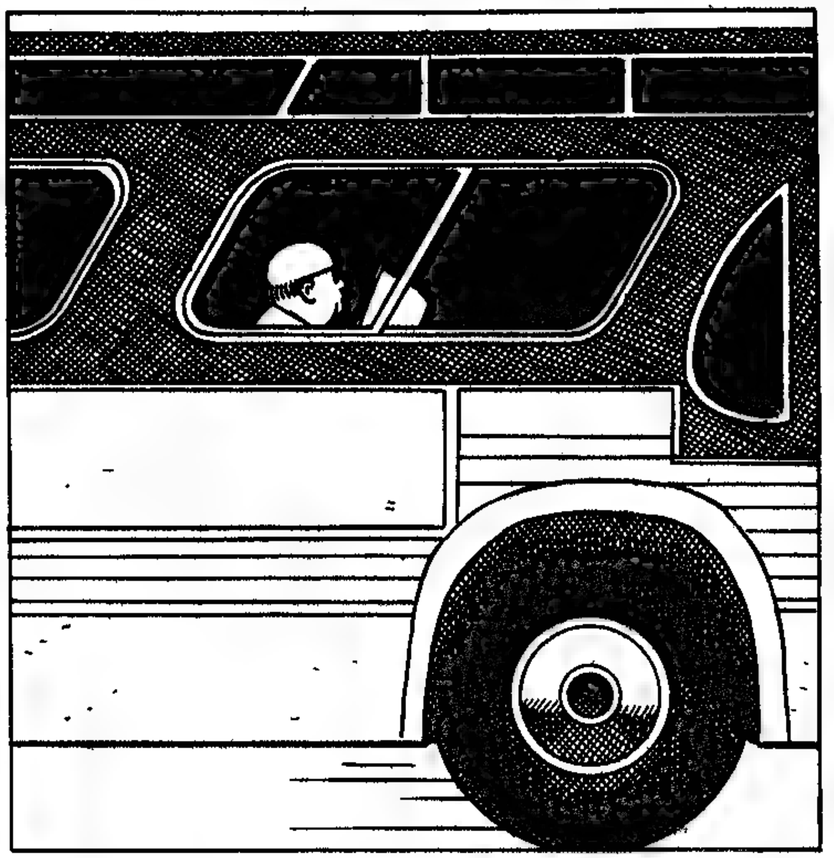

10!
It's the gereral-- he's bolted across the launch pad!
9!
I can't go or. It's up to you to stop him!
8!
USA
7!
Hey, come back!
6!
5!
All right-- you come down from there this minute!
USA
To Be Continued

the bus

PAUL KIRCHNER©





COMING

Heavy Metal is proud to present the brilliant art of Segrelles. (A bit strong, but it got your attention, didn't it?) "The Mercenary," a forty-six-page serial, premieres in the October issue of *Heavy Metal*.

Two of the fellas from Upstart Studios, Howard Chaykin and Walter Simonson, are now preparing, for the October issue, "Shakespeare for Americans." The first of a multitude of one-page segments will be the intro to this innovative and "typically American" bastardization of fine literature. And that's what we love about it.

Plus: the continuations of Bilal's "The Immortals' Fete," Steranko's adaptation of "Outland," and Jeff Jones's "I'm Age."

Richard Corben's

Den 2!

Jeff Jones's

I'm Age!

Romero, Cronenberg, and Carpenter on horror films!

Plus Matena! Giménez! Philip José Farmer!